

# *Curtana* † *Sword of Mercy*

A Journal for the Study of the Military Chaplaincy

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# Table of Contents



## Fore Words

<b>An Introduction to the Ninth Issue</b>	<b>3</b>
---	----------

## Articles

<b>Vermont Army Chaplains in the War of 1812</b> by Kenneth E. Lawson	<b>5</b>
--	----------

<b>Bringing Life to the Starving</b> by Scott R. Gardner	<b>20</b>
---	-----------

<b>The Four Chaplains of the Dorchester</b> by Herman Keizer, Jr.	<b>24</b>
--	-----------

<b>Chaplains &amp; the Holy Mystery of the Call</b> by Robert B. Clemons III	<b>30</b>
---	-----------

## Editorials

<b>Measuring a Career's Success</b> by Robert C. Stroud	<b>36</b>
--	-----------

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## **Martial Poetry**

**40**

James E. Martin † Robert B. Clemons III  
C.S. Lewis † Henry Newbolt  
Charles W. Brodribb † John Masefield  
George Sterling † Siegfried Sassoon  
Laurence Binyon † Walt Whitman  
Robert Bridges † Charles D. Shanly  
Wilfrid W. Gibson † John Galsworthy

## **Resurrected Biographies**

**58**

Alexander Adair † Edward Bartlett † Gains Blodgett  
Peter Burghardt † Frederick Calkins † Henry Callahan  
John Cameron † William Carr † John Carter  
Job Champion † Edward Cooper † Cornelius Cornforth  
Charles Day † Isaac Groot Duryea † William Duryee  
Jacob Enders † Julian Faison † Isaac Fillmore  
Hiram Gordon † Simon Goss † Francis Hall  
David Heagle † Oscar Hitchcock † John Kimball  
John Linn † Alan McFarland † Donald McLaren  
David Morrill † Alexander Murdock † James Nichols  
Henry Northrop † Levi Norton † Lemuel Olmstead  
William Paddock † Jacob Pearse † Ira Pettibone  
Samuel Potter † John Proudfit † George L. Robinson  
George Robinson † Rodman Robinson † Montgomery Schuyler  
Ova Seymour † Alexander Thorburn † David Tully  
John Van Ingen † Peter Van Nest † Cornelius Van Sanvoord  
Robert Wallace, Jr. † Ferdinand Ward † John Werth  
John Woodward † Malcolm Woodward † William Wright

## **Curious Citations**

**76**

## † Fore Words †

### **An Introduction to the Ninth Issue**

Welcome to the ninth issue of *Curtana † Sword of Mercy*. If you would like to contribute an article, editorial or poetry to a future issue of the journal, please contact the editor today.

#### **Unpacking the Contents**

Two articles in the current issue consider ministry to the military from a historical perspective. The first is offered by Ken Lawson who provided a fine Civil War biography for the last issue of the journal. In this issue he explores a lesser known conflict, the War of 1812. International readers may be aware of the fact this is the conflict during which the British burned our national capital.

Herman Keizer, Jr. offers our second consideration of the past. In honor of this week's anniversary of their heroic sacrifice, he leads us in a reconsideration of the Four Chaplains. Those unfamiliar with their story will be blessed by the bold witness of Jewish and Christian chaplains during one of World War Two's many tragedies. Those of us who know the story well still find it inspiring. Those chaplains set the bar for military ministry extremely high.

The other two articles are essentially personal reflections by two chaplains on vital aspects of our shared ministries. Scott Gardner shares his experience during one of the increasingly common humanitarian missions in which many of our nations engage. Robert Clemons III shares the story of his own call to ministry in the armed forces. Some readers will see parallels to their own journeys. All of us need to be reminded that our lives are not our own. When we yield to our God, we are often sent on amazing journeys we could never have charted on our own.

One editorial is included in this issue. It addresses the thorny subject of chaplain promotions (or lack thereof). It will likely speak loudest to those who hoped for greater advancement than they experienced in their careers. However, it is intended to remind us all of several simple principles.

In addition to his aforementioned article, Bob Clemons has provided us with a poem in this edition. James Martin also graces us with another piece. These new works complement a collection of historic poetry about military themes.

Chaplain biographical notes and “curious citations” round out this issue of the journal.

Please share this issue of *Curtana* with others . . . and consider contributing an article, poem, editorial, or media review of your own.

## † Articles †

# Vermont Army Chaplains in the War of 1812

**Kenneth E. Lawson**

### **Background**

For several years before the War of 1812, trouble had been brewing between the United States and Great Britain. England's interference with American commerce and their inciting of Indians against American settlers to the west infuriated most Americans. President Madison, sensing the danger, issued an order calling for the mobilization of 100,000 militia to be ready if war should come. Vermont Governor Jonas Galusha issued orders to raise 3,000 men, Vermont's apportionment. Most Vermonters did not want a war with Great Britain. Nevertheless, even before Governor Galusha's orders, militia volunteers deployed to northern border towns such as Troy and Derby. These northern border communities remembered atrocities committed by Indians and British soldiers upon their parents and grandparents during the Revolutionary War, and were justifiably nervous. Soon after the declaration of War by President Madison, the Vermont Legislature authorized the raising of troops and levied additional taxes on land to support the militia call up.<sup>1</sup>

The 3,000 Vermont troop goal requested by the federal government over the course of the war was met. But reaching the quota was slow in coming. Vermonters enjoyed profitable trade with Canadians along their northern border with Canada, and along the western border with Lake Champlain. War with Great Britain meant the trade with Canadians, who were British citizens, was curtailed or forbidden. Therefore, many Vermonters were against the war for financial reasons and violated laws by smuggling goods back and forth to Canada throughout the war. Other Vermonters were opposed to President Madison's Federalist policies of a strong central government which appeared to be to the detriment of the autonomy of states. Because of these and other issues related to the war, states like Vermont were very reluctant to allow their militia troops to deploy outside of their home state.

During the War of 1812, there were numerous Vermont militia units that mobilized and deployed throughout the state as well as to New York. These militia units were not initially prepared for war, as they mustered and trained only a few days per year. However, Burlington, Vermont, had a small but vital regular army facility

overlooking Lake Champlain. As war approached, this strategic site was fortified and expanded with a battery of artillery and a cantonment area. Regular army troops poured into Burlington, anticipating that Lake Champlain would be a major area of military operations. This assumption was correct.<sup>ii</sup>

Vermont was fortunate to have a regular army presence at Burlington, under Colonel Isaac Clark. Initially, the senior regular army commander for this entire region was General Henry Dearborn. On orders from General Dearborn, Vermont Governor Galusha ordered one regiment of detached militia to serve with the regular army under Colonel Clark. Throughout the summer and fall of 1812 numerous Vermont militia units from various counties were deployed along the Lake Champlain border, with Governor Galusha and Colonel Clark communicating well. By 1813 most of the regular army soldiers were deployed west around the Great lakes, leaving the Vermont border protected only by militia. Smuggling continued, with militia troops in frequent skirmishes with smugglers of both American and Canadian citizenship. Later that year the garrison at Burlington expanded to over 4,000 regular army soldiers from elements of the 4<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup>, 29<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> regular army infantry regiments. In addition, there were two Vermont militia regiments consisting of about 800 citizen soldiers.<sup>iii</sup>



During the War of 1812 the senior militia officer in Vermont was Brigadier General Jonathan Orms of Fair Haven. Jonathan Orms (1764-1850) came to Vermont about 1788 from western Massachusetts. By trade he was a carpenter who came to Fair Haven and built a forge, a saw mill and a grist mill. He later owned these properties and was known both as a rugged outdoorsman and as a capable businessman. He was active in local politics in the Fair Haven area and became known to Governor Jonas Galusha. At the beginning of the War of 1812, Jonathan Orms was a 48 year old man, in excellent health, married and with a family, a mature businessman and a civic leader. Governor Galusha needed a strong leader of his militia, a man who could command soldiers, demand respect, and have technical administrative abilities. Jonathan Orms was an excellent choice. Given the rank of Brigadier General of Vermont Militia, Orms served throughout the entire war under two Vermont governors and had an excellent record.<sup>iv</sup>

## Vermont Chaplains

Two Vermont clergymen served with the American Army in the War of 1812, Rev. William Pattison and Rev. Solomon Aiken.

Rev. William Pattison served as chaplain on the staff of Brigadier General Jonathan Orms, commander of the Vermont Militia during the War of 1812. Headquartered in Burlington, Chaplain Pattison had an active ministry with regular army soldiers and militia troops in Vermont and upstate New York.

William Pattison (1765-1850) was born in Halifax, Vermont, the first white baby born in that village. As a child and teenager during the Revolutionary War, Patterson's parents were constantly harassed by the British. Robert and Elizabeth (Cochrane) Pattison were of Scottish descent and were immigrants to America from Ireland.<sup>v</sup> During the war they moved into southeastern Vermont to Halifax to avoid General Burgoyne's red coat army. They then moved to southwestern Vermont, to Bennington, but war in that area forced them to return east to Halifax.<sup>vi</sup> The childhood and teen years of William were lived in poverty and fear. His parents were devout Baptists, his mother the daughter of a minister.

We do not know much about the childhood of William Pattison. We know Halifax, Vermont was a small town in the rolling foothills of southern Vermont, an ideal rural farming region. At some point in his youth, William had a conversion experience and was called into the ministry. Baptists in that place and time did not have a ministerial school. Rather, candidates for the Baptist ministry studied theology with an older minister as an apprentice until the candidate was considered fit for ordination. We do know that on November 24, 1791, at age 26, William Pattison married Sarah Everett. They had five children. One account states, "Sarah Everett married Rev. William Pattison on Nov. 24, 1791. They lived in Kingsbury, New York; Benson and West Haven, Vermont, and he died in New Britain Connecticut at 84 years."<sup>vii</sup> For most of his life William and Elizabeth lived in the Hudson River Valley that defines the border lands between New York and Vermont.

An exact chronology of the life of William Pattison is difficult to track. The early Baptists in America were an independent-minded group that, unlike the Methodist and Presbyterians, did not keep detailed ministerial records. Later, the American Baptist Home Mission Society formed and more detailed Baptist ministerial records were maintained. The first notice of William Pattison is in the 1790 U.S. Census, where he is listed as a 25-year old resident of the West Ward of New York City. He was the only white male in a household which also had two adult white females, no doubt his mother and a sister. He was married Sarah, who was from the Hudson River Valley area of upstate New York, the following year. We next hear of William Pattison just before 1810, where, according to the Census, he lived in Washington County, New York near the Vermont border. Later in 1810 he had a son, Robert, born in Benson, Vermont, a few miles east of the New York border.<sup>viii</sup>

William Pattison's ministerial career was interrupted by the War of 1812. Pattison mustered in as a chaplain in mid-1812 and served throughout the duration of the war, resigning his position in the spring of 1815. After some time as a pastoral candidate in Warsaw, New York, we next read about Pattison as pastor of the Warsaw Baptist Church in 1818. Warsaw was a new settlement located in rural west central New York State. One account stated, "Rev. William Pattison became pastor in 1818, and served the church for several years, during which there was a large increase in the number of members."<sup>ix</sup> He was the church's fourth minister. This congregation experienced a revival a few years after Pattison arrived. Then in 1827 Pattison left the church in Warsaw to start a Baptist church several miles south in the town of Gainesville, New York.<sup>x</sup>

For the next few years we lose track of William Pattison. He then appears in the 1830s as a pioneer missionary in the backwoods of Michigan, ministering to migrants and immigrants in the wilderness along with his son, the medical doctor Samuel W. Pattison. Three villages we know about in which Rev. Pattison served are Ypsilanti, Fenton and Owosso, all of which were little more than cleared lands with log cabins in the wilderness. Speaking of the history of the First Baptist Church in Owosso, Michigan, one report states, "Early in 1839, Rev. William Pattison, an aged minister, his son, Dr. Samuel W. Pattison, and family, came here from Fentonville, and uniting with the church, added much to its strength. Father Pattison preached while sitting in his chair, and will be long remembered by the early settlers."<sup>xi</sup> While in Michigan, William Pattison was active with the American Baptist Home Mission Society out of Ypsilanti.<sup>xii</sup>

By the mid-1840s, William Pattison returned to upstate New York, and was active with the American Baptist Home Mission Society in Auburn and Troy. In the late 1840s he moved to New Britain, Connecticut where he died in 1850, close to age 85. Throughout his long life his only military experience was as the senior chaplain in the Vermont militia during the War of 1812.

Why William Pattison was chosen to be the senior chaplain in the Vermont militia is an interesting question. In 1812 he was 47 years old, not a younger man. Nevertheless, the choice was a good one. After Jonathan Orms was selected by Governor Jonas Galusha to be the senior militia commander, General Orms knew his troops would need a chaplain. Orms was from Fair Haven, the region in which William Pattison served as a civilian minister. As the War of 1812 began, Pattison was serving Baptist churches in the Kingsbury, Benson, West Haven and Fair Haven areas. It was common at that time for a minister to have more than one congregation. Jonathan Orms knew of the character, vigor, preaching ability, and personal skills of Pattison and he selected him to be his senior military chaplain in the War of 1812.

Chaplain Pattison was garrisoned at the U.S. Army Cantonment, in Burlington, Vermont. As early as June 1812, regular army troops already stationed at Burlington were building an additional battery along the lake. A major military presence quickly developed. The base developed into about fourteen buildings of

various sizes, the largest structure being the hospital. The soldier's elongated barracks was a rough cut wooden one-story building approximately 110 feet long and 18 feet wide. Next to it was the two-story officer's quarters. The hospital was approximately 300 feet long and 22 feet wide, two stories high with a full cellar. Long, shallow storehouse buildings and stables helped to define the perimeter of the base.<sup>xiii</sup>

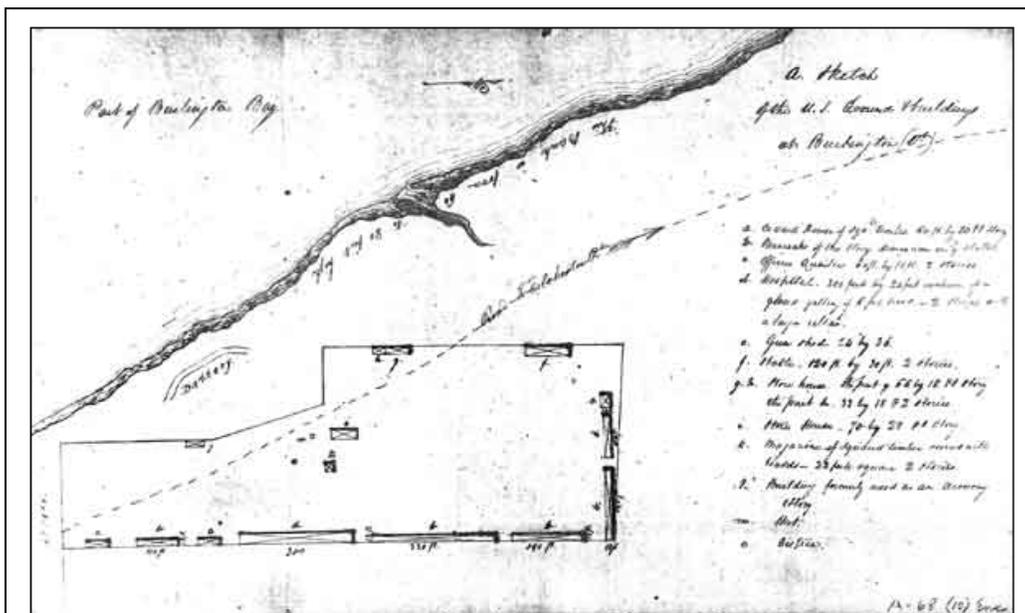
Chaplain William Pattison lived in the officer's quarters in a small single room. All meals were served in the dining hall with the available officers eating together. In this capacity the chaplain led the officers in prayer before meals and sought to know them better over mealtime conversations. These regular army and militia officers had the lives of their men in their hands, and having the emotional and spiritual support from a chaplain was greatly appreciated. Sunday religious services were held in the hospital and outdoors on the parade field by the cistern, or in inclement weather the outdoor religious services were held in the dining room of the officer's quarters.

Chaplain Pattison had his hands full trying to minister to militia and regular army troops that were prone to mischief. Morale rose and fell as the mostly idle troops performed routine and unfulfilling duties in humble circumstances. Some of the troops were considered lazy, wasting time gambling or drinking alcohol. Others received a court martial for petty thefts, sleeping on duty and like indiscretions. Citizens complained of idle troops coming into town shooting off guns into the air, causing fright among the citizens. Another issue was the low attendance at religious services, or the fact that those who *did* attend services would not arrive on time.<sup>xiv</sup>

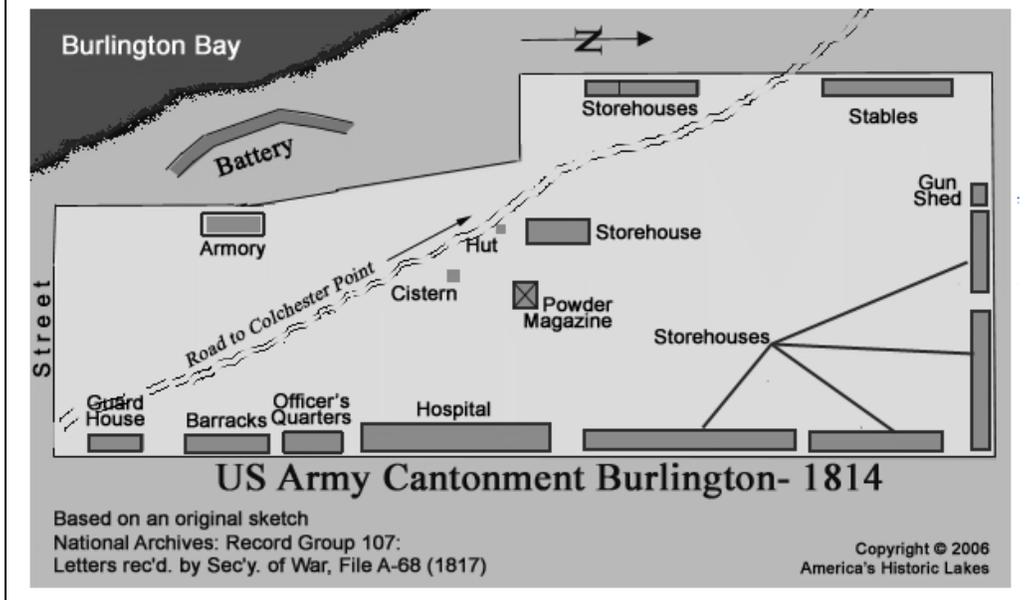
Hospital ministry consumed Chaplain Pattison. His primary ministry was at the military hospital in Burlington, but he also crossed Lake Champlain to minister to wounded, ill or injured troops at the Plattsburg, New York army hospital, as well as at the invalid hospital on Crab Island near Plattsburg. As thousands of troops gathered in crowded conditions, illness and disease became common. Unsanitary conditions produced diarrhea, measles, small pox, and pneumonia. In the winter of 1812-1813, about 15% of all soldiers died of illness or disease. Hundreds of men were in the hospital at the same time. Soldiers arrived filthy and in rags. The illnesses of the soldiers soon spread into the civilian population in Burlington, causing a mild panic. As military operations came and went throughout the New York and Vermont region, so the hospital population increased or decreased.<sup>xv</sup> The clergyman that these several hundred desperate men saw in the hospitals at Burlington and sometimes at Plattsburg was Chaplain William Pattison.

The British attacked the battery defending the cantonment area in Burlington on August 2, 1813. Three British ships heading south began to bombard the battery and storehouses, terrorizing the civilian population of Burlington but causing little long term damage to military structures. Under the protection of the battery, American naval vessels were gathered for repairs or refitting. The British stayed about two miles away in Lake Champlain, hoping to destroy or damage the navy

vessels and storehouses on the wharf. Chaplain Pattison, militia Brigadier General Orms and regular army Colonel Isaac Clark, the cantonment commander, watched the pitched 30 minute or so battle, the general and colonel commanding troops and the chaplain ministering to the wounded. The fire from the American artillery battery was too imposing for the small British flotilla to challenge, so the ships departed and continued south.<sup>xvi</sup>



National Archives: Record Group 107: Letters rec'd. by Sec'y. of War, File A-68 (1817)



Conducting funeral services was an expected duty of military chaplains. In the winter of 1812-1813, there were 750 regular army and militia soldiers who died of disease.<sup>xvii</sup> It is impossible to say how many of these funeral services were

conducted by Chaplain Pattison, but no doubt the number was significant. There were also moral and ethical issues for the chaplain to address. Specifically, Vermont militia officers were incensed at the new Governor Martin Chittenden's November 1813, order for the Third Brigade Vermont Militia to return to Vermont and not to participate in an invasion of Canada through New York. The troops were already at Plattsburg ready to head north when this order was received and rejected by the Vermont militia officers. In Washington, Governor Chittenden's order appeared to be treason.<sup>xviii</sup> But in his defense, the new Governor was very concerned about the vulnerable Vermont borders and his lack of command of Vermont militia stationed in another state. Chaplain Pattison utilized all of his counseling skills to minister to the officers of the Vermont militia, men with whom he lived and dined in the Burlington cantonment. Ultimately the vast majority of the troops stayed in New York and Governor Chittenden backed down.

During the winter of 1813-1814, the senior U.S. Army leadership changed for the New York and Vermont areas, called The Northern Army. George Izard became a major general and Alexander Macomb became a brigadier general. These were younger men who were vigorous and who had already proven themselves in the war. General Izard had his headquarters on the New York side of Lake Champlain; General Macomb had his headquarters with the Burlington Brigade in Vermont. The regular army and militia troops stationed in Vermont were mostly sickly and unmotivated. In the spring of 1814, General Macomb asked Governor Chittenden to call out the militia for duty at Burlington and Vergennes, to protect Vermont from a British invasion. These were busy times for the only full-time military chaplain in the area, William Pattison.

In May 1814, the British completed a probing mission on Lake Champlain. The intention was to destroy American shipbuilding in Vermont, as rumors had reached the British concerning avid shipbuilding activities in Vermont for large naval vessels. The militia was called out to defend the entrance to Otter Creek, which led to sizeable shipbuilding activities in Vergennes. The British sailed by at a distance from Burlington but they did not open fire. The militia swarmed along the shore to resist the attack, and exchanged fire with the British ship from the simple structure at the mouth of Otter Creek called Fort Cassin. The British raid was unsuccessful, with the red coats returning north after destroying some public stores along the way.<sup>xix</sup>

American intelligence predicted the British would conduct a major attack from Canada along Lake Champlain, with an emphasis on the New York side of the lake. In the summer of 1814, most of the Vermont militia and the regular army soldiers in Vermont were sent across Lake Champlain to thwart a potential British invasion. Under General Izard's orders, General Macomb brought his entire brigade of five regiments to the New York side of the lake, namely at Cumberland Head, Chazy, and Champlain. Meanwhile the British around Montreal prepared for a combined army and navy attack focused on the large U.S. Army position at Plattsburg, New York. The British attack was planned with such secrecy that senior U.S. Army leaders transferred General Izard and nine regiments, light artillery,

dragoons, and all the surgeons away from the pending British attack, to a new location at Niagara, New York.

The British land attack upon the large U.S. Army facilities at Plattsburg began on September 6, 1813. The British advanced south from Canada and faced determined American resistance. Meanwhile, the British fleet sailed south towards Plattsburg. The well-thought-out British plan was to attack Plattsburg by land and by sea and surround the city, forcing the Americans to surrender or be defeated in battle. American soldiers and militia fought well in an organized withdrawal around the city. Meanwhile, the U.S. Navy won a stunning victory on Lake Champlain over a vastly superior British naval force. This forced the advancing British soldiers to withdraw back to Canada. A majority of American soldiers who fought in this battle spent some time at the Burlington cantonment and knew Chaplain Pattison. American casualties in the land battle of Plattsburg were 115 killed and 130 wounded. British casualties on land were 37 killed and 150 wounded.<sup>xx</sup> Chaplain Pattison earned the respect and admiration of senior officers, medical personnel, and common soldiers through his relentless and effective ministry to the wounded and dying.

The battle of Plattsburg effectively ended the war in northern New York and in New England. In the late spring of 1815, Chaplain William Pattison returned to his civilian ministries in Vermont. His commander, Brigadier General Jonathan Orms, stayed on duty until October 24, 1815, at which time he resigned his militia commission as a brigadier general and returned to civilian life in Fair Haven.<sup>xxi</sup> The post-War of 1812 career of William Pattison was extensive, as has already been narrated above. A simple summary of the life of Pattison stated, “William Pattison was for many years a worthy Baptist minister, and died at the age of nearly 84, in New Britain, Connecticut, leaving three sons and two daughters.”<sup>xxii</sup> His was a full and active life in Christian ministry. His successful chaplaincy in the War of 1812 was only one of the many remarkable accomplishments of his long life.

## **Vermont’s Other Chaplain**

The second Vermont clergyman that served with the American Army in the War of 1812 was Rev. Solomon Aiken. Solomon Aiken (1758-1833) was born in the central Massachusetts town of Hardwick. He was the second son of John and Jerusha Aiken, who were both born in or near Hardwick and were of Scottish descent.<sup>xxiii</sup> Of the first settlers of Hardwick, Vermont, many arrived from Hardwick, Massachusetts. They came north a few years after the American Revolution ended in 1783, to seek better opportunities for themselves and their families. Solomon Aiken was educated at home and in a rural schoolhouse in Hardwick, Massachusetts.

In 1776, at age eighteen, Solomon Aiken departed Hardwick, Massachusetts, to fight in the American Revolution. He served admirably for two years and was honorably discharged. During the Revolutionary War, he was converted to Christ

and settled upon becoming a minister. He prepared locally with a tutor for college, and then enrolled in Dartmouth College, graduating with a Master of Arts degree in 1786.<sup>xxiv</sup> After Dartmouth he studied theology with a local minister and became a congregational clergyman in Dracut, Massachusetts, in 1788. He ministered in Dracut for 30 years, departing in 1818 for a semi-retirement ministry in his adopted hometown of Hardwick, Vermont.<sup>xxv</sup> It was while serving in Dracut that he temporarily resigned his pulpit to become a military chaplain. After the war of 1812 the Congregational Church in Dracut eagerly called him back, Aiken then serving with an associate minister.

The thirty-year ministry of Solomon Aiken in Dracut was a success. He was pastor of the Congregational Church, which traced its roots to the first church in Dracut in 1711. Arriving in 1788, he served in the meeting house constructed forty years earlier. In 1794, Rev. Aiken guided the church through a growth spurt which resulted in the construction of a new larger meeting house on the newly acquired town common.<sup>xxvi</sup> Upon his arrival in Dracut in 1788, Solomon Aiken married Miss Polly Warner of Hardwick, Massachusetts. They eventually had twelve children.<sup>xxvii</sup>

For a brief time, as early as 1809, Solomon Aiken represented Dracut in the state legislature in Boston. When Aiken became a militia chaplain in 1812 it grew difficult for him to fulfill his civil duties as a state representative. When Aiken was appointed a regular army chaplain in 1814, he had to resign his duties as a state representative.<sup>xxviii</sup>

Solomon Aiken was reasonably well known outside of Dracut. Occasionally he was asked to serve on ordination councils in different towns. Other times he exchanged pulpits with clergymen from various areas in New England, to preach at special events. But the issue that gained him some significant, though brief, nationwide attention was his sermon preached in 1811 in Dracut and subsequently published as *The Rise and Progress of the Political Dissention in the United States*. This 22-page sermon was widely read, as tensions with Great Britain would soon lead to the War of 1812. Aiken came out in this sermon in strong support of the autonomy of the United States, and used copious biblical references to assert the rights of freedom for America. He added that the dastardly deeds of England could not go unpunished.<sup>xxix</sup>

As was true throughout most of New England, the town of Dracut was not enthusiastic about war with Great Britain. There was not a hearty response to the war, but the small town of Dracut was notably represented by its Congregational clergyman, Rev. Solomon Aiken. The exact names of all Dracut men who served in the war are lost to history. But we do know that town records stated that, on June 22, 1812, the town voted to pay its soldiers \$12.00 per month for their military service, in supplement to their federal pay. On April 4, 1814, Dracut townsfolk voted to pay for the provision of “Powder and Balls” for all its citizens called away to war. And on August 31, 1814, Dracut voted to raise the monthly pay of its service men to \$16.00 per month, and to provide reimbursement funds to soldiers—who had to buy their own ammunition, powder, and cooking utensils. Chaplain

Solomon Aiken directly benefited from the generosity of his townsfolk, he being away from 1812 through early 1815.<sup>xxx</sup>

At around age 54, Chaplain Aiken was stationed with the army in and around Boston. His primary responsibility was at Fort Independence on Castle Island in Boston Harbor, Massachusetts Bay. British maritime raids were common and British ships were frequently spotted out at sea. American privateers sailed near the protection of the fort. As one report stated about Rev. Solomon Aiken, “He was settled in Dracut, 4 June, 1788, dismissed 4 June, 1812, and entered the U.S. Army, as chaplain. He was stationed on Fort Independence in Boston Harbor. At the end of the war, he returned to Dracut, and resided there, preaching occasionally until 1818, when he removed with his family to Hardwick, Vt., where he died, 1 June, 1833, aged 75 years.”<sup>xxxi</sup>

Chaplain Aiken’s War of 1812 service at Fort Independence was mostly routine and uneventful. There he ministered to a transient number of regular army and militia troops who rotated onto the island. This fort was essentially an artillery fortification built upon other forts dating back to 1634. During the war, a British squadron repeatedly captured American merchant vessels in Massachusetts Bay, but the fort was a successful deterrent to a War of 1812 British naval invasion of Boston. American privateers used Fort Independence on Castle Island as a safe haven from pursuing British vessels. The British never attacked the fort itself.



A contemporary view of Fort Independence, Castle Island, Boston Harbor.

An interesting War of 1812 experience for Chaplain Solomon Aiken was his ministry to the wounded and dying after the early June 1813, naval battle outside Boston harbor between the British vessel *Shannon* and the American vessel *Chesapeake*. On April 9, the U.S. frigate *Chesapeake* returned to Boston after a cruise against British commercial shipping. Observing the return of the *Chesapeake* was the British ship, the HMS *Shannon*. The captains of both vessels

looked forward to the inevitable engagement. On June 1, 1813, the renovated and resupplied *Chesapeake* left Boston harbor, sailed past Chaplain Solomon Aiken at Fort Independence, and met with the British ship *Shannon* a few miles out to sea. Chaplain Aiken read the special flag created for the *Chesapeake*, which stated, “Free Trade and Sailor’s Rights,” the two major grievances Bostonians had against the British. As the battle began, Aiken could clearly hear the cannon fire and see the flashes of explosives out at sea.

The American captain of the *Chesapeake*, James Lawrence, was killed in battle. The British captain was wounded. After exchanging cannon fire, the ships came together and the British defeated the Americans in hand-to-hand fighting. The *Chesapeake* became a British prize of war. Immediately after the battle, American casualties were taken on small boats to Fort Independence, where Chaplain Aiken and medical personnel treated the wounded and dying. Over sixty Americans died in this brief naval battle off the coast of Boston. Solomon Aiken was the military chaplain who comforted the wounded and honored the dead with military burials.

Throughout his adult life, Solomon Aiken was never afraid to express his political views. For example, we have copies of his sermons from before the War of 1812 which expounded upon American virtues, degraded the British monarchy, and rejoiced in American independence. After the June 18, 1812, Congressional declaration of war against Great Britain, Aiken preached a sermon that was published in Boston and distributed throughout the United States. This sermon, called *An Address to Federal Clergymen, on the Subject of War . . .*, was an extended summary of anti-Tory sentiments and a diatribe against British provocations and insults to American pride. He asserted that Americans were forced into the war due to British provocations, and that war was necessary as a continuance of the American Revolution to ensure complete independence from British tyranny.<sup>xxxii</sup>

Solomon Aiken served as a militia chaplain from the summer of 1812 into 1814. On September 16, 1814, he was made a chaplain in the regular army.<sup>xxxiii</sup> He is remembered by history not primarily as a chaplain or as a pastor, but as a political leader and publisher. As one source stated,

Mr. Aiken enjoyed uncommon health and vigor. He never took a particle of medicine, or lost a relish for food, until his final and brief sickness—a pleurisy fever. He possessed peculiar power as a logician, and was very popular as a preacher. He was kind-hearted and benevolent, almost to a fault. But it is chiefly as a political writer that Mr. Aiken is remembered. He was sent as a representative for two years, by the town of Dracut. He published several sermons and pamphlets, chiefly upon political themes, which excited much attention in their season.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

Theologically, Solomon Aiken was a Congregational Calvinist of the Samuel Hopkins sort, a Hopkinsian, meaning his Calvinism was not as rigid as that

considered orthodox as embraced by Princeton Theological Seminary. Politically, he supported the policies of Presidents Thomas Jefferson and James Madison, an unpopular stance in much of New England. “He was a man of commanding presence; his hair and eyes were black, his complexion clear, and his body well proportioned.”<sup>xxxv</sup>

Chaplain Solomon Aiken enjoyed military ministry. As news of the cessation of hostilities reached Fort Independence, Chaplain Aiken wrote a letter to the Secretary of War, James Monroe. Aiken requested of Secretary Monroe that, as the army downsized after the war, that he be allowed to stay on active duty as a chaplain.<sup>xxxvi</sup> This request was refused, as the army released thousands of troops from active duty and returned to a smaller peacetime military force. Aiken then returned to his civilian ministry in Dracut.

Aiken resigned his pulpit at the Congregational Church in Dracut, Massachusetts, in 1818, after a thirty year ministry. He headed with his wife and younger children to Hardwick, Vermont, where he had many relatives in the area. At sixty years of age, he still had his health and a sound mind. The semi-retired Solomon Aiken was not idle in rural Hardwick. He farmed a small piece of land. He enjoyed his relatives. He was active in local politics. And he kept engaged in ecclesiastical affairs. An example of this is his scholarly and lengthy 120-page article in 1821, written from Hardwick and published in Montpelier, Vermont. It is a circular letter to churches in New England related to council decisions, legal issues, and doctrinal distinctives.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

The 1820 Census gives us our first record of Solomon Aiken in Vermont. In the 1820 Census there are four Aikens listed in all of Vermont, all in rural northeastern towns. They are James Aiken and his family in Rygate, Samuel Aiken and his family in Barnet, Samuel Aiken (junior) in Barnet, and Solomon Aiken and his family in Hardwick, Vermont.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

The War of 1812 veteran Solomon Aiken arrived in 1818 in Hardwick, settling among numerous family members in northeastern Vermont. In the 1820 Census it lists Solomon Aiken as the head of household with one male above forty-five years old (himself), one female above forty-five (his wife Polly), one male 16-26 years old, one female 16-26 years old, and two females 10-16 years old (his younger children). Previously, some of his older children had migrated to the Hardwick Vermont, area. Later, some of his other children migrated north to Hardwick, establishing a strong nineteenth century legacy of Aikens in Hardwick, Vermont.

Around 1820, Hardwick had grown to almost one thousand residents and had fledgling industries in sawmills, gristmills, and tanneries. The community was farm orientated, very rural, and stable. In Hardwick, Rev. Solomon Aiken joined his adult children, four sons and two of his daughters, who previously had returned to their roots in upstate Vermont.<sup>xxxix</sup> The Hardwick Congregational Church had a ministerial vacancy from 1817 to 1822. Rev. Aiken filled the pulpit and helped the church interview potential ministers. As one source stated, “He

occasionally filled the pulpit to the satisfaction of his hearers.”<sup>xi</sup> Mrs. Polly Aiken died in Hardwick, Vermont, in 1820. Surrounded by family and friends, Solomon outlived his wife by thirteen years. Solomon Aiken died in Hardwick in 1833 and is buried in the Center Cemetery in Hardwick. He was described as a “man of commanding presence,” as a man who was “courteous and distinguished,” and as a man who had a good and lasting influence.<sup>xii</sup> A description of Rev. Aiken continues,

He was strong mentally and physically, bold and fearless in announcing his opinions... his influence was a good and lasting one upon the community... His death occurred in this town, [Hardwick, Vermont] June, 1833, when nearly seventy-five years of age. His remains lie in the Center Cemetery of Hardwick. On his monument is this inscription: “In youth, a soldier of the Revolution; in age, a Christian pastor; through life the inflexible friend of civil and religious liberty.”<sup>xiii</sup>

The War of 1812 experiences of Chaplains Pattison and Aiken were typical of the hundreds of American chaplains who served in the war. Most Army chaplains served within the boundaries of their home state, as did Chaplain Pattison. Other chaplains served outside their home state, as did Chaplain Aiken. Both men had enduring Vermont roots before, during, or after the war. They understood that their call to the gospel ministry extended beyond the confines of a local church and a specific community. As the soldiers deployed, so did their chaplains.<sup>xlii</sup>

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<sup>x</sup> Louis M. Sweet, *History of the Centennial Celebration: Warsaw, Wyoming County, New York, June 28 to July 2*, (1903), p. 57.

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<sup>xlii</sup> "Hardwick Township Information," p. 13.

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# Bringing Life to the Starving

**Scott R. Gardner**

August 1992.  
Mombasa, Kenya.

It was my third deployment. I had already deployed to the extreme borders of Asia, Korea and Saudi Arabia. This was different, as it was a joint operation. The mission was called JTF (Joint Task Force) Provide Relief. The U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army Special Operations and U.S. Marines (USMC) had not deployed to fight—the first and strongest skill. We had arrived to exercise another skill we have been refining in recent years. We arrived on the east coast of Africa to assist starving Ethiopian refugees who were flooding across the border to Somalia due to famine.

It was not simply a Joint United States mission. We were joined by several fine units from other countries. Together we sought to help those in desperate need.

There was death everywhere. This coalition of countries gathered together to bring in food and critical supplies. We operated out of the international airport in Mombasa, Kenya, as it had the largest runway available. Only there could we begin to handle all the heavily laden airlift aircraft that would be dispatched to save lives.

Based out of Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina, we arrived with a fleet of C-141 cargo planes. In addition we had C-130 aircraft, which possessed the vital capability of landing on dirt airstrips. This was special to me, personally, as my father was a C-130 pilot during many of his thirty-two years as an Air Force officer. I recall a friend telling me some of these very aircraft *may have actually been flown by my father* as the C-130 has been a workhorse for the USAF for so many years.

These aircraft joined us from bases in Germany and the continental United States. The situation was dire, and the need to get to the scene of the emergency was urgent. There was inadequate time to sufficiently perform a thorough evaluation of the runway. Fortunately, however, we were part of an Air Force tactical unit uniquely prepared for just such a contingency.

## **Chaplains are Not an Afterthought**

I was chaplain for the Tactical Airlift Control Element (TALCE) from Charleston AFB, so the role of the chaplain was written directly into the plan. The mission was controlled by United States Central Command (USCENTCOM) and they did not bring a chaplain to the humanitarian relief effort, as they did not have one assigned at the time.

It appears that during cutbacks and limitations in the number of staff members allowed at Joint headquarters, the chaplain position had been deleted. The expendability of the chaplain was justified with the thought that a chaplain could be “added” if necessary, as a scenario developed. There in Kenya, with the mission unfolding so quickly, there was simply no time for that to be accomplished at USCENTCOM headquarters in Florida.

I became the JTF Chaplain for over 500 military personnel by default. The USMC brigadier general in charge on the ground saw me at his first staff meeting and I was simply named the JTF chaplain. That was a huge amount of responsibility for a mid-level captain. Later it was determined that a Chaplain, Colonel should be part of the staff at USCENTCOM—a lesson learned after the fact, and in my mind a direct result of *this* mission.

For now, though, it was me. I did all the normal things a chaplain should do. I arranged for worship opportunities. I had an altar “constructed” by stacking cases of food we called Meals Ready to Eat or MREs. Many of us recognized how truly fitting that particular altar was, due to the reason for our mission.

I spent time with the service members without regard for the branch on their uniform. I visited the coalition troops, which included getting to know our military members and military members from various nations, especially our hosting nation, Kenya. I had some remarkable discussions with a chaplain in the Kenyan military and he helped me better understand his country and culture. I was fortunate to learn so early in my career just how much we Americans have to learn from our international allies.

I helped plan the missions to take food into Somalia, some of the most memorable experiences for me personally. This all took place six months before the tragic events which were captured in the movie *Blackhawk Down*. Those were certainly interesting times.

As I said, a most fascinating part of the mission was actually conveying food to the needy. We flew into Somalia on a C-130 aircraft and delivered supplies. I have a photo of me standing in front of the Belet Huen International Airport: a grass hut on a dirt runway. Due to the pace of the relief effort, the aircraft performed what was called an ERO (engine running offload). This meant that everything was kept hot and ready to launch as soon as passengers and supplies were downloaded.

## **A Sweet Lesson**

We were told we would be picked up by another aircraft in two hours. I carried along some Life Savers® candy I planned to give to children. Upon arrival a medical person on the ground with the International Red Cross told me most of the children could not have the candy. Their skeleton-like, utterly emaciated bodies could not handle the sugar. Later I was taken to a camp not far away where

children had been recuperating from starvation incurred during the long walk in search of food. Some of these children had been in camp long enough to transition to reasonable health and they were able to receive the meager gift. I was amazed at what I saw.

I offered some candy to a little boy. He asked what it was so I opened the roll and ate a piece of candy. The boy opened his hand to the candy roll and took out one piece of candy. He licked it and gave it to his brother who also licked it and then it was folded back up in the wrapper. The little boy had never seen a Life Saver, and he did not want to consume it all right away. I thought of how many times I had eaten a whole pack without thinking much of it and was also reminded of how blessed we Americans are, and how little so many in our world possess. With great abundance comes great responsibility. It emphasizes the need for conscientious stewardship of God's gracious blessings.

I watched as bodies of those who had not been strong enough to survive were rolled into cardboard and placed in the ground. Such devastation and such acute need. Twenty children were dying in the camp each day. Thousands had perished on the march across Somalia from Ethiopia seeking sustenance. I took photographs of makeshift grass huts where families were living. Unwilling to have their suffering forgotten, I photographed struggling children and starving mothers. I remember feeling numb as I walked through the streets praying our efforts would have an impact. I recall thinking if we saved one life, the entire humanitarian effort was worth it. I have a favorite photo of a smiling boy who was happy and fed and running in the camp. He was a survivor, alive because people had cared.

Some at the time said our efforts would not amount to much . . . simply a water pistol against an inferno. Others declared our actions were politically motivated. Some said we should spend more time teaching people to grow food and care for the soil to prevent famines from happening. Perhaps there is a kernel of truth in these comments. Yet, as a chaplain, I was plagued by the question: "What would God have us do?" We had food; we could give it away. Let others discuss motive and reason, and debate military options in these situations. We later learned that some criminals took advantage of the situation, and were stealing food intended for victims even as it arrived on ships in the harbor. They sold or traded it to others for personal benefit . . . while their fellow human beings starved.

The bottom line: we still needed to do what was right. Anything that might help alleviate suffering is worthwhile. One fed child. One mother saved from starvation. We hear much of United States military actions in war-torn areas around the world. We read of our military members suffering from the impact of post traumatic stress. We seldom read about the humanitarian efforts performed by our military. Missions of mercy and generosity that are taking place year-round, world-wide.

A familiar quotation, often misattributed to Alexis de Tocqueville, sums up a powerful principle: "America is great because she is good-when she ceases to be

good she will cease to be great.” Whatever its origin, these words ring true. As I reflect back nearly a quarter century after my experience in Africa, I recognize that fact. We must always seek to do what is right. We, alongside the citizens of all of the good-willed nations of the world, must keep being lifesavers.

*“If you are preoccupied with people talking about the poor,  
you scarcely have time to talk to the poor.  
Some people talk about hunger, but they don’t come and say,  
‘Mother here is five rupees. Buy food for these people.’  
But they can give a most beautiful lecture on hunger.”*

Mother Theresa

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# The Four Chaplains of the Dorchester

## Herman Keizer, Jr.

The Four Chaplains of the Dorchester embody a deep commitment to servant ministry. Chaplains call this a ministry of presence, which these four chaplains demonstrated in the most humble, yet heroic manner.

At the heart of service lies . . . *presence*. Service, as presence, means being *with* another! Presence is a service of *vulnerability*. It means being willing to suffer what the other suffers, and to go with the sufferer in his or her own suffering. Presence involves exposing oneself to what the sufferer is exposed to, and being with the other in the most vulnerable times and places.

The four chaplains' story is one that should be told continually because it illustrates the presence of God in a manner that transcends differences of faith and doctrine.

Jesus Christ once said, "Greater love has no man than to lay down his life for his friends." The story of the Four Chaplains of the USAT *Dorchester* is a story about that kind of love. Or as Saint Francis of Assisi said, "Always preach the gospel—use words if you must." These four chaplains were very different people from very different backgrounds, experiences, cultures, and religions. If they shared any one thing it was a belief in a God, who was the Creator of the universe and of all the things in that universe.

These four men met each other in November of 1942 at Harvard University, the wartime home of the United States Army Chaplain School. At forty-two, George Fox was the oldest and Clark Poling was the youngest at age thirty. Alexander Goode and John Washington were just a few years older than Clark.

Reverend George Fox enlisted in the Army, from Vermont, on the same day his son, Wyatt, enlisted in the Marine Corps. Fox had served in World War One at age seventeen, after convincing the Army he was eighteen. A lie told by many patriotic young men eager to serve their country in war. (This is a practice not completely unknown in more recent times.) He served in the Medical Corps during the war, with heroic distinction on the battlefield which earned him a Silver Star and a Purple Heart. So Fox intimately knew the dangers the soldiers faced on the battlefield and he was convinced that he had to enter into this war. "They need me!" he said. He was by that time a Methodist minister. This time, he was *not* going to war to care for and heal the wounds of the body, but to care for and to heal the wounds of the soul.

Reverend Clark V. Poling, a Hope College Graduate, was from Ohio. He was serving as the pastor of a Dutch Reformed Church in New York. His desire was to

enter the military as an ordinary soldier and not as a chaplain, because as he told his father, “I am not going to hide behind the church in some safe office far from the action.” His father, Reverend Daniel Poling, had served in the First World War as a Chaplain. He put young Clark in his place by telling him, “Don’t you know that chaplains have the highest mortality rate of all the branches in the Armed Forces. As a chaplain, you’ll have the best possible chance of getting killed. You cannot carry a weapon to kill the enemy or to defend yourself.” Clark gained a new appreciation for the chaplaincy and followed in his father’s footsteps. Clark Poling wrote this humble request in a letter to his father, “I know I shall have your prayers, but please don’t pray simply that God will keep me safe. War is dangerous business. Pray that God will make me adequate.”

Rabbi Alexander Goode had followed his father into the rabbinate. He had served congregations in Marion, Indiana, and then in York, Pennsylvania. While studying for the ministry, Alexander had joined the National Guard. When war was declared, he wanted more than ever to serve the needs of those in combat. He, too, chose to become an Army Chaplain.

Father John P. Washington was one of nine children who grew up in one of the toughest neighborhoods in Newark, New Jersey. He wore glasses and was very mild mannered. He loved music and had a beautiful voice. He was strong and tough inside, because as a teenager, he was the leader of the Twelfth Street Gang. Then God called him to the ministry. John returned to the streets of New Jersey and used his street smarts to organize team sports and to befriend the neighborhood kids. He also inspired them with his singing of the beautiful hymns of the church.

The differences in these chaplains’ backgrounds and personalities could have easily caused them to deny friendship and put some distance between each other. In the world of the 1940’s, religious differences caused and created conflict and division, yet, these four men found a powerful kind of unity in ministry as a chaplain, and in that unity they found a tremendous strength.

## **The Hazardous Journey to the Front**

The four chaplains were assigned to the U.S.A.T. Dorchester, an aging coastal luxury liner that had been pressed into service as a troop ship. Stripped of all the amenities of luxury, the ship was crammed full of bunks and cots. On 23 January, the chaplains boarded the ship and became part of the 902 on board—Merchant Marines, civilians and soldiers.

Going to war on a troop ship is never easy, but this trip was especially difficult. The sea itself was dangerous, a cold, near freezing, turbulent expanse of black frigid water, made more ominous by strong winter winds and heaving waves. The ever present threat of German submarines was all through the Atlantic crossings,

sinking Allied ships at a rate of 100 a month. The Dorchester and her passengers were going to traverse an area that had become known as “Torpedo Junction.”

In 1942 German U-boats turned the shipping lanes off Cape Hatteras into a sea of death. Often visible from the New England shore were the fires of ships and crews dying in the hot fires and frozen waters just off shore. The German U-boats were cruising up and down the United States eastern sea-board; they sank 259 ships, littering the waters with cargo and bodies.

You could feel and touch the fear seeping out of the young, frightened soldiers. Many were sea-sick. They were packed below decks in cramped, hot quarters. They knew that if they survived the crossing they would soon be dumped into the cauldron of war.

In their midst, were four men of God, themselves fearful of the prospects of the journey and the battles that lay ahead. They also knew that they were called to put aside their own fears and uncertainties in order to be servants to the needs of others and minister to them as God’s representatives.

They moved among the men and women on board: listening to stories and fears; praying with the fearful; sharing their faith with those whose faith was faltering; conducting worship services; organizing talent shows; leading in the singing of psalms and hymns and just being present with the troops.

Each chaplain wore the insignia of his faith—the tablets or the cross. These were symbols that carried meaning for young people who were schooled in their faith traditions, but they were also symbols of God’s concern for his people. One was the symbol of Moses, who led the ancient people of Israel from bondage to the Promised Land. The other was a symbol of Jesus who came to dwell among men, to suffer, to die and to be raised, so an abundant life could be shared by those who followed him.

The chaplains also knew that they needed to lean on each other for strength. They prayed for and with one another. They shared stories and concerns about family and friends. Chaplain Fox had left a wife, a son and a daughter behind; Rabbi Goode a wife and a three-year-old daughter; Chaplain Poling left a pregnant wife and an infant son, Corky.

Their parish, their synagogue, their congregation now was this old luxury cruise ship. Their neighborhood was the cold North Atlantic. They were still Reverend, Rabbi and Father, but now they were more - they were *Chaplain*. This boat was their community of faith and they were to tend to the religious needs of all. The four chaplains discovered the deep reality of their dependence on the God they served and on each other. *This is a wonderful mystery of ministry as a **chaplain**.*

They moved among the men, listening and talking with them. The men were playing poker one evening when Father John Washington was walking through the

Galley. One man called to him and asked him to come and bless the cards he was holding. Father John looked and proclaimed loudly, “You want me to waste a blessing on a pair of threes?”

The faith, friendship and shared ministry they cultivated during those ten days at sea would be the source of strength for them on that terrible morning of 3 February.

The German torpedo struck below the water line. The explosion killed many instantly, others were hurled wounded and screaming to the floor. Ammonia gas swirled through the cabins and hallways, choking and strangling others. Top side, the icy deck made maneuvering difficult, panic caused chaos on the deck. Many had ignored the orders to always wear their life vests because of the heat and the discomfort below deck, and now they clamored for vests from the storage compartments.

Through all this commotion and disorder, the soldiers heard the calm voices of the chaplains. They saw them handing out life jackets. *In the end they saw them give up their own life vests, helping until they could no longer do anything but grasp the rail and each other.*

The story of the Four Chaplains immediately captured the attention and the imagination of the American people. Their story and legend became a tribute to all the chaplains serving in World War Two.

To verify the facts of the survivors’ stories, letters were sent to 226 of the survivors. Forty persons, under oath, revealed facts concerning the happenings of that night. Facts that were greater than the legend; they told of the round-the-clock ministry of these faithful shepherds who visited the sick, led worship, and sang with the men aboard ship in informal gatherings before that fateful night. They told how with utter disregard of self, having given away their life jackets to four men who had no jackets, the chaplains stood hand in hand, praying to the God they served for the safety of those men who were leaving the stricken ship on all sides of them.

What a sight that must have been, men in life vests with red identification lights flashing in the dark night - Red flashing lights spreading through the dark night in the cold, freezing water. Then there was the noise of the ship sinking into the water and the deep sucking sound as it sank under the waves.

The men and women in the cold freezing waters of the North Atlantic soon became victims of deadly hypothermia, which brought death and stillness among the sea of red lights. The rescue of the Coast Guard Cutters was almost too late. They pulled on board both the frigid living and the frozen dead.

The soldiers reported hearing songs and hymns from the chaplains. They heard, over the screams of pain and terror of their comrades in the freezing water, the chaplains giving their final testimony. They were giving to and receiving strength

from each other. To their soldiers they gave hope and peace with their final declaration of faith. They were the final sounds the soldiers heard as they waited for rescue or death. These 4 chaplains were TAPS for the dead and dying.

## **A Glorious Legacy**

If we listen, maybe we can still hear them as they pray:

Hail Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with thee; blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

Shema Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad.

Our Father, who art in Heaven! Hallowed be your name!

What can we learn from these four men of God? Not all of us are called to be ordained to the ministry as chaplains. But we are all called to love the men and women with whom we share this planet. We live in a diverse and pluralistic society. We need to move beyond religious tolerance toward a new respect and acceptance of our differences. We need to see that we have an obligation to our fellow human beings who live in the distress of poverty, slavery, forced prostitution, in bondage to oppressive tyrants. We must help restore their humanity as people who have lost the dignity of image bearers of God.

We see the heroism of our young men and women serving around this globe in service of our country. They are a down payment on our freedom and our liberty. Their sacrifice must not go un-noticed. We should all pause and give them the final honor of a salute and hear the plaintive words of taps:

*Fading light dims the sight  
And a star gems the sky, gleaming bright  
From afar drawing nigh,  
Falls the night.*

*Day is done, gone the sun  
From the lakes, from the hills, from the run  
All is well, safely rest;  
God is nigh.*

*Then goodnight, peaceful night;  
Till the light of the dawn shineth bright.  
God is near, do not fear,  
Friend, goodnight.*

The Four Chaplains of the Dorchester were the Taps for the soldiers and merchant marines that fate-filled night. They were proof that God was near, have no fear, children of a loving God, goodnight.

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*Herman Keizer, Jr. held numerous important positions during his distinguished career as a chaplain in the United States Army. Following retirement, he served his church (the Christian Reformed Church in North America) as their endorsing agent. As the Director of Chaplains CRCNA, Emeritus, he continues to advance the influence of all chaplains serving in the armed forces of the United States.*

# **Military Chaplains and the Holy Mystery of the Call**

**Robert B. Clemons III**

The nature of God's call upon individuals is a holy mystery. I think that strange action of God is incomprehensible to those who have never received it. However, it is also never fully dissected by most of us who have felt the great talons grasp us from on high and carry us to thoughts and processes we may not have fathomed before God revealed to us we were set apart for service.

The same beloved family members who were elated that I accepted my call into pastoral ministry as a 25 year old, were mystified when I informed them thirteen years later that I felt God was directing me into military chaplaincy. My dear Grandmother, with a look of despair on her face asked me, "But Robert, why are you leaving the ministry and joining the Air Force?"

The extraordinary truth is those two aspects of my call are not only "connected" but merely two of a yet unknown number of different tributaries of a mighty river that surges through every part of my being. One that continues to cut new channels where and when I least expect them. I hope that as I unfold this personal thesis, you will see common ground, areas of disagreement, perspectives that set you thinking deeply, but no reasons to engage in angry, religious debate. At 65, with 40 years of intense self-searching and perhaps more intense God-searching, I find angry religious debate to be totally useless and unpleasantly damaging to all involved.

Since, this is an article in a journal that serves chaplains, let me begin with my calling into chaplaincy, even though I did not become an Air Force chaplain until I was 38 years old, which places that ministry 12 years after my entry into ordained pastoral ministry. Actually, it is fitting to address this early, because it is the heart of this article.

One of the most painful chapters of my life began when at 19, married for nine months to the same beautiful girl I am still in love with today, I was required to join the Army, go through nearly five months of training, followed by a one year tour of duty in Vietnam. The main pain I'm speaking of is not being in a war zone, but being separated from Phyllis almost continuously from February 10, 1969 until return from Vietnam on July 25, 1970.

I was part of the Army Security Agency (ASA), which at the time was the Army branch of the National Security Agency (NSA). ASA members were among the first American military members in Vietnam. All of us possessed high security

clearances due to the sensitive nature of our work. My clearance was Top Secret/Cryptographic (TS/Crypto). We were not allowed to discuss the nature of our individual responsibilities with anyone without a need to know, and that included the unit chaplain. As anyone in such a job knows, it is a lonely position in which to be.

The first time I saw Chaplain Wesley Bassen was within days of arriving in Saigon. I was immediately captivated by this giant of a soldier with a radiant smile that was easy to see long before I noticed the cross on his Superman shaped chest. He made me feel like he was serving in Vietnam just so he could be there for me. That's not what he said, of course, but it is what I felt.

My twelve to eighteen hour work days were spent in the most secure building in Saigon, surrounded by concrete walls that were several feet thick and totally windowless, handling materials most of which were stamped Top Secret. Most of that year I saw very little sunlight, but it seemed to me that every time I was out of our classified work location I ran into Chaplain Bassen. For me, he was like an oasis in the desert. While I could not discuss any work issues with him, I was able to pour out to him my heartaches about missing my wife, the interruption of my life goals, and the strange feelings I had in my soul about God wanting me to become a minister.

We were required to work six and a half days per week. I was able to get my half-day off on Sunday mornings and made it a point to be in chapel every week. Over the course of those twelve months, Chaplain Bassen touched my soul with nothing more than a caring, sacrificial heart, and nothing less than God's touch through one of His faithful servants.

One of the issues we spent much time discussing was my calling into ministry, which for me was still far too primitive to result in more than wonderment and talk. But he saw something real in all of my fog and wrote several letters to the pastor of my home church. He also corresponded with a previous pastor who had been there when I began feeling even more primitive versions of the call as a fourteen or fifteen year old. I would consider it treasure equivalent to gold to possess those letters, but unfortunately, I never saw them. They were, after all, not directed to me, but to the pastors whom Chaplain Bassen made sure were aware of God's influence upon me. I still marvel, especially when I think of the shortcomings of my own ministries, that he invested the time to send letters to those civilian pastors who were my shepherds back home.

What I *do* have is one letter from my local church pastor (Rev. Michael Fryga, now deceased), who wrote me near the end of my year in Vietnam. He covered a number of personal areas of interest such as my extended family, the unusually cold (for South Carolina) winter they had just been through, and how much help my wife was in various church events. In the last paragraph of the letter Rev. Fryga said, "We have received communications from time to time from Rev. Wesley A.G.

Bassen. He tells us of your good attendance and receiving Holy Communion at the services.”

I received another letter from the other pastor I mentioned, who coincidentally was also an Army Reserve Chaplain. He retired years later as the Reserve brigadier general, serving directly under the Army Chief of Chaplains at the time. That letter is one of the lost needles in twelve large haystacks (actually file boxes) of papers and mementoes from my forty years of professional ministry that I still aspire to mine for treasures. However, I remember clearly what he said: “Chaplain Bassen has written me several letters discussing your sense from God that He is calling you into ministry. I recall that the Lord started that process with you while I was your pastor in Andrews. I look forward to assisting you when you are ready to begin the process of education and ordination as a United Methodist minister.” That pastor, Rev. George Fields stood behind me the day I was ordained as an Elder in the UMC, and laid hands on me along with the bishop as the Conference joined in the prayer that the Holy Spirit would empower my ministry.

These two threads in the fabric of my life demonstrate the interconnectedness of God’s call upon my life, and how the chaplaincy is wound through it tightly. But the fabric is far more complex than these two individual threads.

## **A Surprise at the Seminary**

In the Methodist tradition we baptize infants. I was baptized a few weeks after I was born in June of 1949. The pastor of our local church had served as a chaplain for the duration of World War Two. That may not seem like a very long thread, but it gets longer. Twenty-five years later, when I started seminary, I needed a job to help support my wife and our daughter. The pastor of a large Methodist church just a few miles from the seminary was looking for an Assistant to the Minister as the position became vacant just a few weeks before I was to begin my seminary training. I started that job and my first day of seminary education on the same day, September 1, 1975. The pastor was the same World War Two chaplain who had baptized me in my home church. During the year I worked for him, we had many discussions about the ministry he provided as a chaplain during the war.

I don’t know if this experience is common to all seminary students, but on the first day of classes I was with friends in the student union when members of our UMC endorsing agency arrived. They said they were there to talk to any of the new students who might be interested in serving as chaplains after their educational process was finished. A Voice within me said, “I want you to become a military chaplain.” I cannot prove to anyone that voice was God, but I thought it was, and the truth is the thought horrified me. I was not ready to deal with the thought of going back into the military in any capacity. Nevertheless, I attended the meeting and stored away the things I heard there.

I was ordained one year later with what the UMC calls Deacons Orders. This is a first level of ordination a UMC minister receives at a certain level in his progress toward Elder's Orders and full Conference Membership. With that ordination I also became pastor of a country parish about eighty miles from the school I attended. At that parish and in the two others I served during the following eleven years, I had military retirees and Reservists in each parish. This was true even though each congregation was at least two hours from the closest military bases. Every one of them told me I should become a military chaplain. They observed gifts in me they felt would contribute to that ministry. While I wasn't ready to answer that call for over a decade after first hearing that, I believe God was speaking through their witness.

In 1986, I became convinced God was determined I would become a chaplain, and I submitted the official paperwork thinking, "They'll never take me—I'm too old to begin military service." What I was told is, "No, we could take you, even up to 40 years of age, but the UMC has no open slots for active duty chaplains. We'll put you at the bottom of the stack of all the others who are applying for a slot." (At that time, there were thirty others ahead of me.)

I applied for a Reserve slot in the Air Force about a year later (when there still were no open slots for active duty United Methodist chaplains). I thought that would probably satisfy God. I got accepted into the Reserves immediately, but there were no openings in the next Chaplain School at Maxwell Air Force Base, which was to start a couple of months later.

Unknown to me, another one of those fibers was working its way through the weave. It turned out that the UMC chaplain who had interviewed me for endorsement by the UMC also happened to be the Commandant of the Chaplain School, and when he found out I wanted to go, he simply made another seat available.

Those four weeks at the Chaplain Service Institute at Maxwell AFB yielded an amazing truth in my journey: I absolutely loved the chaplaincy, I loved the Air Force, I loved everything about what I was learning and doing, and the people I was meeting during the four weeks of training. From that point, it was not God putting the pressure on me anymore. It was me putting the pressure on God: "Please open up a slot for a UMC chaplain to get into the USAF." At that point there were then over forty UMC ministers who had met the credentials to be eligible for a slot and who desired one. But there were no positions available.

On 1 February 1988 I called the Office of the Chief of Chaplains for the USAF to ask if there was going to be a slot for a United Methodist Minister to go into the USAF. In my old age I realize that was a desperate and audacious thing to do, but back then I did it without a second thought. I didn't get to speak to the Chief of Chaplains personally, but whoever it was I spoke to gave me a heartfelt and tender, while to the point and clear cut answer: "Honey, we have three open slots for

chaplains for this year, and none of them are for a United Methodist.” When I hung up the phone, I actually broke down crying.

That year was a leap year. I will always remember that, because it was February 29<sup>th</sup> of that year, that Jim Townsend, our endorsing agent, called me at my office. I had talked to him many times and had sent many cards and letters reminding him I wanted a shot at any slot they got. Jim said, and I will remember this verbatim till the day I die, “Bob, we got one slot today, a miracle slot, and it’s the only one we anticipate getting for a long while. We have been through forty applications today of ministers just like you who want a chance to go into active duty service in the Air Force, and all three times your name came up to the top. It’s your slot if you want it.”

I knew then, and I know now that I was not the best candidate. I have never beaten out forty other competitors in anything. I recognized clearly then, and I know clearly now, that God made that slot for me.

## **It’s Not Our Call, It’s God’s**

On the surface, this article to an audience that is filled up with other chaplains and other servants of God related to the chaplaincy, may seem to be me taking the opportunity of talking about myself. But I promise you I am too aware of all my shortcomings to write this long about myself. I am trying to make a strong point about a Holy Calling . . . one that many of you have shared.

There is a mystery in the Call of God that is as deep as any mystery in the universe. Bill Stackhouse who baptized me and hired me in my first church position . . . he who had served as a chaplain in World War Two . . . told me the substance of his Calling to over forty years of ministry was *an overwhelming feeling that there was a need he could fill*, and he made himself available to fill it. At the time, his description seemed too weak to me, but I was a very immature (and over zealous) Christian and (new) minister. Now I know that the Call goes out to all sorts of people. People of metaphysical, philosophical minds such as my own and practical, down to earth minds like Stackhouse’s. People like Noah, Abraham, Moses, Samson, Elijah, David, Daniel, John the Baptist, John the Evangelist, Peter the Fisherman, Augustine, Martin Luther, John Wesley, Mother Teresa, and every other kind of man and woman who God in His Omniscience and his Holy Humor chooses. We are flawed people, but Almighty God has called each of us for His own reasons. Who is capable of prosecuting that?

I served thirty-five years in active institutional ministry. These included nine years as an active duty chaplain and thirteen years as a Reserve chaplain. The ministry I was able to do as a military chaplain was the most powerful portion of my service. Because of who we are as chaplains, I was able to serve service members, and to open windows to the power of God in their lives in ten states, eighteen countries, during five major deployments including the First Gulf War, and during a greater

complexity of circumstances and complications than the average civilian minister would ever have the opportunity of experiencing.

And I was simply an average chaplain.

We have a holy calling. Most civilians do not begin to understand what we do. Many in the military do not fully understand our role in their lives. Some secular critics would disband the chaplaincy and eliminate our presence forever. But we serve as a powerful flank of God's Army and I am so grateful to God for allowing me to be a part of our ministry in the military chaplaincy. I know you are as well.

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*Robert B. Clemons III is a full-time self-employed author. He is currently writing his first novel serially. It available for free reading at [www.QuantumWordsmith.com](http://www.QuantumWordsmith.com). Clemons retired from the United States Air Force Chaplain Service as a Lieutenant Colonel with twenty-seven years service. He also retired from the United Methodist Church with a total of three and a half decades of service. In addition to his Master of Divinity, he holds degrees in Communications and Psychology. He is also the author of a poem included in this issue of Curtana.*

† Editorials †

## Measuring a Career's Success Is it a Matter of Rank?

**Robert C. Stroud**

As my promotion board for colonel approached, I had several interesting conversations with my adult children. Due to the slow down in promotions, like my peers, I was already eligible for retirement by the time my board met. My kids recognized that, and expressed their shared preference that I choose retirement at that time so my wife and I could move “home” and participate in the joy of helping raise their children. That was an attractive option, but I believed that if the Air Force thought I had additional skills that could benefit the service with greater responsibilities, I would enthusiastically embrace that trust. In the meantime, however, my daughter and her brothers asked if it would be okay for them to pray that I *not* be promoted, for the benefit of our extended family. I appreciated being asked, and counseled them to pray however they felt led.

God answered their prayers.

I had been in that rare situation of being blessed in either case. I felt a bit torn in my desires, like Paul describes at the beginning of his letter to the Philippians. “I am hard pressed between the two” (Philippians 1:23, ESV). If I was to remain on active duty, that meant “fruitful labor for me.” Likewise, I yearned to have a small hand in the nurturing of our grandchildren, and sensed that “to depart and be” with our extended family was, personally speaking, “far better.”

I know that I am not alone in being torn like this. Many, perhaps most, have a clearer sense of their own preferences in this context. My own feelings were jumbled. My wife and I did not pray for promotion, but only that the Lord’s will be done. That, of course, is how trusting disciples should *always* pray. Yet we sometimes pray for particular outcomes, do we not? On this occasion, though, my “neutral” prayer was wholly sincere.

When my commander informed me that my name was not on the short list, my spirit was downcast—but only for a moment. I had already informed him, and my

command chaplain of my intention to retire that summer if I was non-selected for promotion. I submitted the necessary paperwork the next day and began the joyous task of preparing to return to ministry in the civilian world. Naturally, I worked right up until my last day in my final assignment, but I was eager to return home to loved ones and the unknown adventures awaiting me in my not quite “retirement.”

## A Lingering Disappointment

By many measures, my career as a military chaplain was clearly successful. However, by that most visible of measurements—promotion—the matter is less settled. Although I am comfortable with having retired as a lieutenant colonel, I occasionally sense a nagging awareness that I have not totally embraced that fact. For me, those rare and fleeting sensations of disappointment are vivid reminders that I am not experiencing the contentment with my circumstances that Paul described to the believers in Philippi. I chalk that up to a dichotomy, a condition we Lutherans so readily acknowledge. Just as I am *simul justus et peccator* (at the same time justified, yet still a sinner), I am *simul contentus et desiderium* (simultaneously at peace yet still longing). Such is the life of the pilgrim in the world.

What is more, I am able to analyze the reason why my regret has diminished little (and perhaps, God forbid, even grown) during the passing years since my retirement.

## Skewed Expectations

At the outset of my active duty career I encountered several chaplains whose own promotions played a major role in shaping my understanding of career progression. To say it as charitably as possible, they excelled in neither word nor deed. Not only were they altogether “average,” the members of their staffs held serious reservations about their trustworthiness. Seeing one such chaplain would have had little effect on me. After all, everyone understands there are exceptions to norms. However, quickly encountering several such chaplains, I was persuaded that even a mediocre minister could expect to attain the rank of lieutenant colonel in the Air Force. Thus, my low bar for success was set at O5.

During subsequent years, when the armed forces entered into radical downsizing, I witnessed the other end of that spectrum. I watched as several truly exceptional chaplains were forced to leave active duty as majors, simply because there were not enough promotion billets. This taught me that even dedicated and gifted chaplains could consistently be overlooked by promotion boards. Still, the seed had already sprouted before that time. In the recesses of my conscious mind, I think I assumed that I would certainly be promoted to lieutenant colonel since even the mediocre had been.

A second reason for my need to visibly succeed arose, I am sure, from my subconscious beliefs. I realize that many of us are compelled to succeed because of the highly conditional approval we received from our parents. In my own case, I had a doting Christian mother. My father, however, was an alcoholic atheist. His addiction did not prevent him from achieving the esteemed rank of sergeant major in the United States Marine Corps. (His impressive career is something of which I still remain proud.) But it did prevent him from being a good husband or father. He spent three years of my life deployed, and when he was home, the alcohol and his life choices left him distant and critical. I am no psychotherapist, but I understand that many of my insecurities derive from that poor relationship.

## **One More Reason for My Regret**

While I was assigned to the United States Air Force Chaplain School (called at the time, the USAF Chaplain Service Institute), I was an outspoken advocate of a principle I still believe would be beneficial to the American armed forces. I argued that we should return to the practice that characterized the first half of our nation's history, with our chaplains wearing no military rank, but only their respective faith insignia. With our typical historical illiteracy, most people assume that chaplains always followed the example of line officers, in rising up the ladder of military respect and authority as we publicly pinned on our new ranks. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Admittedly, there are benefits to possessing rank, especially when it is of an elevated nature. Most notably, you can use it to intercede for others. Calling on behalf of a new recruit having trouble with a lazy bureaucrat may have more success when a colonel is intervening than when a chaplain does so. Nevertheless, what we sacrifice in the exchange—the privilege of being regarded first, foremost and fully as a *chaplain*—is too steep a price to pay. I could argue my case more fully, but since that is not the purpose of this reflection, I will simply end these thoughts with how this debate itself contributes to my lingering disappointment about not earning eagles.

You see, I served my three year tour at the school as the clearly junior member of the staff. Unique circumstances (which I would, perhaps naïvely, consider divine providence) had resulted in my being assigned there as the only captain. I was quite conscious of the irony of the individual lacking any rank (of substance), being the sole voice advocating the dissolution of the visible power structure. It was, after all, a policy that had allowed us to seat a two star flag officer at the table of each of the Chiefs of Staff. In the back of my mind, I hoped to someday achieve sufficient rank for my words to be taken seriously. To be able to state, with utter honesty, that I was more than willing to lay aside my eagle and be regarded only for the cross I wore, would have been more persuasive, I suspect. But that was not to be. And today, I am wary to raise the argument, although I still find it persuasive, lest

it be dismissed with contempt on the basis that it is an evidence of “sour grapes” on the part of a chaplain who didn’t quite make the grade.

## A Final Thought

As I ponder my mixed feelings about my military career, I am forced to admit to myself that I am a vain man. It is, I believe, a good thing that I was not promoted. Maybe, not positive for the military (that remains unknown) but a good thing for me. Not only was I granted the blessing of being immersed in the sheer happiness of being a grandpa, but I was delivered from the potential of thinking even more of myself than I ought.

I recently read something from C.S. Lewis that displays his typical wisdom and relates directly to my own circumstances in the fall season of my life. Most readers are familiar with Lewis’ diverse, prolific and anointed work. Few, however, know that during the latter years of his own life, he felt his creative energies diminishing. The following excerpt from an intimate letter he wrote to a friend in 1949 resonates with me. Perhaps it will have something to say to others, as well.

As for my own work, I would not wish to deceive you with vain hope. I am now in my fiftieth year. I feel my zeal for writing, and whatever talent I originally possessed, to be decreasing; nor (I believe) do I please my readers as I used to. I labour under many difficulties. My house is unquiet and devastated by women’s quarrels. I have to dwell in the tents of Kedar. My aged mother [his “adopted” mother Mrs. Janie Moore], worn out by long infirmity, is my daily care. Pray for me . . . that I ever bear in mind that profoundly true maxim: “if thou wish to bring others peace, keep thyself in peace.”

These things I write not as complaints but lest you should believe I am writing books. If it shall please God that I write more books, blessed be He. If it shall please Him not, again, blessed be He. Perhaps it will be the most wholesome thing for my soul that I lose both fame and skill lest I were to fall into that evil disease, vainglory.

I wish to echo the words of this gifted saint. If God desires my success or my diminution in any given circumstances, blessed be He. After all, I have learned during this sojourn that it is not *what* truly determines success, but *Who*. Soli Deo Gloria.

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*Robert Stroud is a graduate of the University of Washington, Luther Seminary and the Jesuit School of Theology at Berkeley. He hosts a blog that addresses a wide range of subjects with a nod to C.S. Lewis, at MereInkling.net. He is also the editor of Curtana: Sword of Mercy.*

† Martial Poetry †

# Military Muses

A Good Soldier  
Boxes of Life Saved Long Ago  
Saboteuse  
The Vigil  
Expeditional  
The Choice  
To the Hun  
Dreamers  
Remorse  
The Pity of It  
A Clear Midnight  
To the United States of America  
Civil War  
The Conscript  
The Soldier Speaks

James E. Martin  
Robert B. Clemons III  
C.S. Lewis  
Henry Newbolt  
Charles W. Brodribb  
John Masefield  
George Sterling  
Siegfried Sassoon  
Siegfried Sassoon  
Laurence Binyon  
Walt Whitman  
Robert Bridges  
Charles D. Shanly  
Wilfrid Wilson Gibson  
John Galsworthy

## Contributors:

**Laurence Binyon** (1869-1943) was an English poet and art scholar. Too old to volunteer for duty during WWI, he served as a hospital orderly in France.

**Robert Bridges** (1844-1930) was a British Poet Laureate. He is the only physician to have held the position. Bridges also wrote and translated a number of hymns still in use.

**Charles Brodribb** (1878-1945) was a British journalist and poet.

**Robert B. Clemons III** is a retired United States Air Force chaplain. A chaplain veteran of the Gulf War, he also served in Vietnam in a combat role.

**John Galsworthy** (1867-1933) was an English playwright. Although passed over for military service during WWI, he volunteered to serve as a hospital orderly in France.

**Wilfrid Wilson Gibson** (1878-1962) served in the Royal Army during WWI. He wrote “war poetry” with great sensitivity despite the fact not serving abroad during the war.

**C.S. Lewis** (1898-1963) was the foremost Christian apologist of the last century. He was a wounded WWI combat veteran and provided valuable radio broadcasts during WWII.

**James E. Martin** is a retired United States Air Force veteran and Baptist clergyman who has published a collection of patriotic poetry.

**John Masefield** (1878-1967) was a Poet Laureate of the United Kingdom. Exempted from the WWI draft due to age, he still volunteered to serve in a hospital in France.

**Henry Newbolt** (1862-1938) was one of Britain’s leading writers who was recruited for the War Propaganda Bureau during WWI.

**Siegfried Sassoon** (1886-1967) was an English poet who was decorated for bravery on the Western Front during the First World War.

**Charles Shanly** (1811-1875) was an Irish poet who moved to Upper Canada where he served as a military officer during the suppression of the “Rebellion of 1837.”

**George Sterling** (1869-1926) was an American poet and playwright who reveled in the literary community anchored in the Bohemian Club of San Francisco.

**Walt Whitman** (1819-1892) was a humanist poet. During the American Civil War he served as a volunteer nurse in Union hospitals. He wrote many war-related poems.

# A Good Soldier

**James E. Martin**

Being a good soldier is a lofty aspiration.  
Achievement of this goal brings high admiration.  
This purpose should be one's determination,  
Gratitude will result from a proud nation.

To see this high and lofty end,  
Attention to detail must one lend.  
Devotion to duty must he never bend,  
Loud and clear must this message he send.

Above and beyond is his call,  
Careful to never in disgrace fall.  
Proudly with his peers standing tall,  
Confidence and courage he shows to all.

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# Boxes of Life Saved Long Ago

**Robert B. Clemons III**

I've been going through boxes of life saved long ago—  
boxes of letters, and pictures, and pieces of the puzzle of life—  
pieces of my life as a soldier in a war nobody understood—  
a war that stole the lives of thousands whom their country  
seemed to hate for good; calling them hoods.

My boxes of stored life contain the symbols of love from those  
who cared and hoped I'd be one of the lucky ones—  
those who cried with me when I left—  
those who felt bereft by the theft of their husbands and brothers  
and friends and sons.

My boxes don't store any of the spit and profanity spewed upon us  
by a thankless, clueless public who believed we were there to enjoy the killing—  
who imagined we must find it thrilling to spend a year of abandon,  
spilling our blood and guts and youth and life on a land that Hanoi Jane  
told them we raped.

I've been going through forty-five years of boxes of stored life,  
wondering at the mystery of it all—the mystery of the Call  
from out of the Holy into my very heart—a place I find difficult  
to believe He really enjoys—a Call He began when I was a child playing with toys,  
by laying His Hand upon me and saying without words: "You're mine, boy."

And I recall that in so many ways I retorted with insolence,  
"I'll be Yours, but don't waste me."

How stupid are the words of youth—how uncouth—how foolish!  
As I keep searching through the boxes that store my life, I'm filled  
with tears at the losses, thanksgiving at the opportunities,  
and self-derision for the ways I let Him (and me) down.

The boxes from the other war are more pleasant—the war where swamps  
and monsoons are replaced by dry, endless desert and dust, but then  
welcome home presents—a war where letters from strangers back home  
lauded us for being us—a war with so much less sacrifice than the other—  
less pain and loss for more money and praise, where we were called  
heroes and marched in parades for days.

How were they different, Vietnam and the Desert?  
Why was one a curse and the other treated like a Bible verse?  
I can't understand a universe where wars go on from beginning to end!  
Didn't Christ make it clear we're supposed to be friends?

I've been going through boxes of life saved long ago—boxes of letters,  
and pictures, and pieces of the puzzle of being in the world—  
trying to comprehend what it was all about—  
attempting to understand the meaning of the strife and the swirl of thoughts  
and questions and wonderings that make me shout, "I don't get it,"  
but on further reflections have to add, "Nevertheless, thank You for the ones  
You sent to love me all the way through it and stored them safely  
in my boxes of life."

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*An article about the call to military ministry written by Chaplain Clemons also appears in this issue of Curtana.*

# Saboteuse

**C.S. Lewis**

(From *That Hideous Strength*)

Pity hides in the wood,  
The years and tides,  
The earth, the bare moon,  
Death and birth,  
The freezing skies, the sun  
And the populous seas  
Against her, one and all,  
Are furiously incensed.

They have clashed spears to drown  
The noise of her tears;  
They have whetted swords.  
Still They cannot forget.  
Her faint noise in the wood  
Destroys all,  
A soul-tormenting treason  
Threatening revolt.

They beat with clamorous gongs  
And din with hammers  
To stun so light a noise.  
They fear if once  
Pity were heard aloud  
In the strong city,  
Topless towers would fall,  
Engines stop.

Horribly alarmed, they have levied  
Their war and armed  
All natural things against her.  
From horns and stings,  
Mandibles, claws and paws  
And the human hand,  
From suns and ice, like a deer  
Pity runs;

Lest, if she wept in peace,  
While they slept, (So they believe) the slow-  
Descending stream  
Would grow to a pool, spread,  
Widen and overflow  
And creep forth from the wood,  
Grown strong and deep.

And they would wake at morning  
And find a lake  
Lapping against their walls,  
Mining, sapping,  
Patiently eating away  
The strong foundations  
Of the towers of pain, rising  
An inch in an hour;

Till the compassionate water  
Would ripple and splash  
Far overhead, and the Powers  
Lay drowned and dead  
Below, sharing the dark  
With shark and squid  
And the forgotten shapes  
Of rotting wheels.

Therefore they woke destruction  
Against her and invoked  
The Needs of the Sum of  
Things And the Coming Race  
And the Claims of Order—oh all  
The holiest names  
Known in our hearts. They even  
Included her own.

# The Vigil

**Henry Newbolt**

ENGLAND! where the sacred flame  
Burns before the inmost shrine,  
Where the lips that love thy name  
Consecrate their hopes and thine,  
Where the banners of thy dead  
Weave their shadows overhead,  
Watch beside thine arms to-night,  
Pray that God defend the Right.

Think that when to-morrow comes  
War shall claim command of all,  
Thou must hear the roll of drums,  
Thou must hear the trumpet's call.  
Now, before they silence truth,  
Commune with the voice of truth;  
England! on thy knees to-night  
Pray that God defend the Right.

Single-hearted, unafraid,  
Hither all thy heroes came,  
On this altar's steps were laid  
Gordon's life and Outram's fame.  
England! if thy will be yet  
By their great example set,  
Here beside thine arms to-night  
Pray that God defend the Right.

So shalt thou when morning comes  
Rise to conquer or to fall,  
Joyful hear the rolling drums,  
Joyful hear the trumpets call,  
Then let Memory tell thy heart:  
"England! what thou wert, thou art!"  
Gird thee with thine ancient might,  
Forth! and God defend the Right!

# Expeditional

**Charles William Brodribb**

TROOPS to our England true  
Faring to Flanders,  
God be with all of you  
And your commanders.

Clear be the sky o'erhead,  
Light be the landing:  
Not till the work is sped  
Be your disbanding.

On the old battle-ground  
Where fought your fathers,  
Faithful shall ye be found  
When the storm gathers.

Fending a little friend  
Weak but unshaken—  
Quick! there's no time to spend  
Or the fort's taken.  
Though he defy his foes,  
He may go under.  
Quick! ere the battle close  
Speed with your thunder.

He hath his all at stake:  
More can have no man.  
Quick! ere the barrier break,  
On to the foeman.

Troops to this England true  
And your commanders,  
God be with all of you  
Fighting in Flanders.

© Charles William Brodribb.

# The Choice

**John Masefield**

The Kings go by with jewelled crowns;  
Their horses gleam, their banners shake, their spears are many.  
The sack of many-peopled towns  
Is all their dream:  
The way they take  
Leaves but a ruin in the brake,  
And, in the furrow that the ploughmen make,  
A stampless penny; a tale, a dream.

The Merchants reckon up their gold,  
Their letters come, their ships arrive, their freights are glories:  
The profits of their treasures sold  
They tell and sum;  
Their foremen drive  
Their servants, starved to half-alive,  
Whose labours do but make the earth a hive  
Of stinking glories; a tale, a dream.

The Priests are singing in their stalls,  
Their singing lifts, their incense burns, their praying clamours;  
Yet God is as the sparrow falls,  
The ivy drifts;  
The votive urns  
Are all left void when Fortune turns,  
The god is but a marble for the kerns  
To break with hammers; a tale, a dream.

O Beauty, let me know again  
The green earth cold, the April rain, the quiet waters figuring sky,  
The one star risen.  
So shall I pass into the feast  
Not touched by King, Merchant, or Priest;  
Know the red spirit of the beast,  
Be the green grain;  
Escape from prison.

© **John Masefield.**

# To the Hun

**George Sterling**

Not for the lust of conquest do we blame  
Thy monstrous armies, nor the blinded rage  
That holds thee traitor to this gentler age,  
Nor yet for cities given to the flame;

For changing Europe finds thy heart the same  
And as of old thy bestial heritage.  
The Light is not for thee. The war we wage  
Is less on thee than on thy deathless shame.

Lo! this is thy betrayal—that we know,  
Gazing on thee, how far Man's footsteps stray  
From the pure heights of love and brotherhood.

How deep in undelivered night we go—  
How long on bitter paths we shall delay,  
Held by thy bruteship from the Gates of Good.

© **George Sterling.**

# Dreamers

## Siegfried Sassoon

Soldiers are citizens of death's gray land,  
Drawing no dividend from time's tomorrows.  
In the great hour of destiny they stand,  
Each with his feuds, and jealousies, and sorrows  
Soldiers are sworn to action; they must win  
Some flaming, fatal climax with their lives.  
Soldiers are dreamers; when the guns begin  
They think of firelit homes, clean beds, and wives.  
I see them in foul dugouts, gnawed by rats,  
And in the ruined trenches, lashed with rain,  
Dreaming of things they did with balls and bats,  
And mocked by hopeless longing to regain  
Bank holidays, and picture shows, and spats,  
And going to the office in the train.

© Siegfried Sassoon.

# Remorse

## Siegfried Sassoon

Lost in the swamp and welter of the pit,  
He flounders off the duck-boards; only he knows  
Each flash and spouting crash,—each instant lit  
When gloom reveals the streaming rain. He goes  
Heavily, blindly on. And, while he blunders,  
“Could anything be worse than this?”—he wonders,  
Remembering how he saw those Germans run,  
Screaming for mercy among the stumps of trees:  
Green-faced, they dodged and darted: there was one  
Livid with terror, clutching at his knees. . . .  
Our chaps were sticking 'em like pigs . . . “O hell!”  
He thought—“there's things in war one dare not tell  
Poor father sitting safe at home, who reads  
Of dying heroes and their deathless deeds.”

© Siegfried Sassoon.

# The Pity of It

**Laurence Binyon**

I walked in loamy Wessex lanes, afar  
From rail-track and from highway, and I heard  
In field and farmstead many an ancient word  
Of local lineage like “Thu bist,” “Er war,”

“Ich woll,” “Er sholl,” and by-talk similar,  
Nigh as they speak who in this month's moon gird  
At England's very loins, thereunto spurred  
By gangs whose glory threats and slaughters are.

Then seemed a Heart crying: “Whosoever they be  
At root and bottom of this, who flung this flame  
Between folk kin tongued even as are we,

“Sinister, ugly, lurid, be their fame;  
May their familiars grow to shun their name,  
And their brood perish everlastingly.”

© **Laurence Binyon.**

# A Clear Midnight

**Walt Whitman**

This is thy hour O Soul, thy free flight into the wordless,  
Away from books, away from art, the day erased, the lesson done,  
Thee fully forth emerging, silent, gazing,  
    pondering the themes thou lovest best.  
Night, sleep, death and the stars.

© **Walt Whitman.**

# To the United States of America

**Robert Bridges**

Brothers in blood! They who this wrong began  
To wreck our commonwealth, will rue the day  
When first they challenged freemen to the fray,  
And with the Briton dared the American.  
Now are we pledged to win the Rights of man;  
Labor and Justice now shall have their way,  
And in a League of Peace—God grant we may—  
Transform the earth, not patch up the old plan.

Sure is our hope since he who led your nation  
Spake for mankind, and ye arose in awe  
Of that high call to work the world's salvation;  
Clearing your minds of all estranging blindness  
In the vision of Beauty and the Spirit's law,  
Freedom and Honor and sweet Loving kindness.

© **Robert Bridges.**

# Civil War

## Charles Dawson Shanly

“Rifleman, shoot me a fancy shot  
Straight at the heart of yon prowling vidette;  
Ring me a ball in the glittering spot  
That shines on his breast like an amulet!”

“Ah, captain! here goes for a fine-drawn bead,  
There’s music around when my barrel’s in tune!”  
Crack! went the rifle, the messenger sped,  
And dead from his horse fell the ringing dragoon.

“Now, rifleman, steal through the bushes, and snatch  
From your victim some trinket to handsel first blood;  
A button, a loop, or that luminous patch  
That gleams in the moon like a diamond stud!”

“O captain! I staggered, and sunk on my track,  
When I gazed on the face of that fallen vidette,  
For he looked so like you, as he lay on his back,  
That my heart rose upon me, and masters me yet.

“But I snatched off the trinket—this locket of gold;  
An inch from the centre my lead broke its way,  
Scarce grazing the picture, so fair to behold,  
Of a beautiful lady in bridal array.”

“Ha! rifleman, fling me the locket!—’tis she,  
My brother’s young bride, and the fallen dragoon  
Was her husband—Hush! soldier, ’twas Heaven’s decree,  
We must bury him there, by the light of the moon!

“But hark! the far bugles their warnings unite;  
War is a virtue,—weakness a sin;  
There’s a lurking and loping around us to-night;  
Load again, rifleman, keep your hand in!”

# The Conscript

**Wilfrid Wilson Gibson**

Indifferent, flippant, earnest, but all bored,  
The doctors sit in the glare of electric light  
Watching the endless stream of naked white  
Bodies of men for whom their hasty award  
Means life or death maybe, or the living death  
Of mangled limbs, blind eyes, or a darkened brain;  
And the chairman, as his monocle falls again,  
Pronounces each doom with easy indifferent breath.

Then suddenly I shudder as I see  
A young man stand before them wearily,  
Cadaverous as one already dead;  
But still they stare untroubled as he stands  
With arms outstretched and drooping thorn-crowned head,  
The nail-marks glowing in his feet and hands.

© **Wilfrid Wilson Gibson.**

# The Soldier Speaks

**John Galsworthy**

If courage thrives on reeking slaughter,  
And he who kills is lord  
Of beauty and of loving laughter—  
Gird on me a sword!  
If death be dearest comrade proven,  
If life be coward's mate,  
If Nazareth of dreams be woven—  
Give me fighter's fate!

If God be thrilled by a battle cry,  
If He can bless the moaning fight,  
If when the trampling charge goes by  
God himself is the leading Knight;  
If God laughs when the gun thunders,  
If He yells when the bullet sings—  
Then my stoic soul but wonders  
How great God can do such things!

The white gulls wheeling over the plough,  
The sun, the reddening trees—  
We being enemies, I and thou,  
There is no meaning to these.  
There is no flight on the wings of Spring,  
No scent in the summer rose;  
The roundelays that the blackbirds sing—  
There is no meaning in those!

If you must kill me—why the lark,  
The hawthorn bud, and the corn?  
Why do the stars bedew the dark?  
Why is the blossom born?  
If I must kill you—why the kiss  
Which made you? There is no why!  
If it be true we were born for this—  
Pitiful Love, Good-bye!

Not for the God of battles!  
For Honour, Freedom and Right.  
And saving of Gentle Beauty,  
We have gone down to fight!

## † Resurrected Biographies †

*Most of the biographical notes presented in this issue of Curtana: Sword of Mercy come from a single source, Union College Alumni in the Civil War. Naturally, this source focuses on academic considerations (not always included elsewhere). In some cases, however, the entries are more extensive and record additional ministry highlights. Because of this, the entries constitute a valuable addition to Curtana's ongoing mission of preserving the memory of the chaplains who served during this epic and tragic conflict.*

† Curtana †

### **Alexander Adair**

United States Army Chaplain  
(Regiment Unverified)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 32.

1855

Alexander Adair, ΦBK, A.M.  
Chaplain U.S. Vols., 1862-5.

† Curtana †

### **Edward Otis Bartlett**

United States Army Chaplain  
(150<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 47.

1859

Edward Otis Bartlett, ΦBK, D.D.  
Age 30. Chaplain 150<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols., Nov. 20, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment, June 17, 1865. Was on Sherman's March to the Sea.

† Curtana †

### **Gains Mill Blodgett**

United States Army Chaplain  
(Union Hospital: New York)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 8.

1834

Gains M. Blodgett, A.M.

Captain and Hospital Chaplain, July 15, 1862. Mustered out, July 26. 1865.

† Curtana †

### **Gains Mills Blodgett**

United States Army Chaplain

(Union Hospital: New York)

Source: George R. Howell, *Bi-Centennial History of Albany* (New York: W.W. Munsell, 1886): 2:896

Gains Mills Blodgett served the congregation [of New Scotland Presbyterian Church in Albany] as stated supply from June, 1846, until June, 1856. He was a chaplain in the U.S. army during the Rebellion, and at its close was honorably mustered out of service.

† Curtana †

### **Peter Hewins Burghardt**

United States Army Chaplain

(65<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 12.

1840

Peter H. Burghardt, ΦBK. A.M.

Age 50. Chaplain 65<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols. June 11, 1861. Dismissed, March 21, 1863. Reinstated, June 6, 1863. Mustered out with detachment, Sept. 12, 1864. At Fair Oaks, where all the field officers were killed or wounded, he took command of his Regiment and led it back into action.

† Curtana †

### **James Frederick Calkins**

United States Army Chaplain

(149<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 13.

1841

James F. Calkins, ΦBK, A.B.

Chaplain 149<sup>th</sup> Pa. Vols., June 3, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment, June 24, 1865.

**Henry Callahan**

United States Army Chaplain

(114<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 9.

1836

Henry Callahan, ΦBK, A.B.

Chaplain 114th N.Y. Vols.. Sept. 8, 1862. Discharged, Sept. 29, 1863.

† Curtana †

**John James Cameron**

United States Army *Line Officer*

(17<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 31.

1854

John James Cameron, ΦBK, A.M.

Chaplain U.S. Vols., 1861. Died in Army Hospital, Yorktown, Va., May 14, 1862.

† Curtana †

**John James Cameron**

United States Army *Line Officer*

(17<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: George R. Howell, *Bi-Centennial History of Albany* (New York: W.W. Munsell, 1886): 2:896

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of November, 1857, John James Cameron became by ordination and installation the sixth pastor [of New Scotland Presbyterian Church in Albany]. His ministry here extended until the 19<sup>th</sup> of August, 1860, when, his healthy failing, he resigned. Upon the organization of the 17<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vol. Regiment he was commissioned as 2<sup>d</sup> Lieutenant, November, 1861. He died serving his country, May, 1862, a victim to malaria and exposure to camp life.

† Curtana †

**William H. Carr**

United States Army Chaplain

(4<sup>th</sup> New York Heavy Artillery)

Source: Henry M. Dodd, *Centennial of the Old First Congregational Church, Windham, New York, June 16th, 1903* (Windham, New York: Windham Journal, 1903): 43.

The next supply was from Prattsville. He was Rev. William H. Carr, who served from May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1874, to early in 1875. . . . Mr. Carr was born at Kinderhook, N.Y., 1812. His early ministry was in the Presbyterian church. He was at Centerville 1867-70, and served Reformed churches at Sharon and Gallupville, N. Y. He was Chaplain of Fourth N.Y. Volunteers from beginning to end of War, and was honorably discharged. He died Aug. 7<sup>th</sup>, 1890.

† Curtana †

**John Hubbell Carter**

United States Army Chaplain  
(100<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 26.

† Curtana †

**Job Hiram Champion**

United States Army Chaplain  
(179<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 25.

1852

Job Hiram Champion, ΦBK, A.M.

Chaplain 179<sup>th</sup> Penn. Vols., May 29, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment, July 27, 1863. Wounded at Fair Oaks, Va.

† Curtana †

**Edward Cooper**

United States Army Chaplain  
(8<sup>th</sup> Ohio Cavalry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 11.

1839

Edward Cooper, D.D.

Chaplain 8<sup>th</sup> Ohio Cavalry. June 30, 1864. Mustered out, July 30, 1865.

† Curtana †

**Cornelius [Columbus?] Cornforth**

United States Army Chaplain  
(150<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 34.

1856

Columbus Cornforth, A.M.

Private 42<sup>nd</sup> Pa. Vols.. 1861-3. Chaplain 150<sup>th</sup> Pa. Vols., Dec. 29, 1864. Mustered out with Regiment, June 23, 1865.

† Curtana †

### **Charles Orrin Day**

United States Army Chaplain

(Spanish American War)

Source: Henry M. Dodd, *Centennial of the Old First Congregational Church, Windham, New York, June 16th, 1903* (Windham, New York: Windham Journal, 1903): 43-44.

In the Summer of 1876, from May to September, they were fortunate enough to secure as a supply Rev. C.O. Day, a student of Andover Seminary. He did a good work during his brief stay, reuniting the church which had been divided over the election of an elder and initiating the repairing and reshingling of the meeting house. . . . Charles Orrin Day was one of the Day family of Catskill, and a great grandson of Rev. David Porter, D. D., he was born Nov. 8<sup>th</sup>, 1851, graduated at Yale College 1872 and Andover Seminary 1877. His work in the ministry has been, one year in a Mission Chapel, Montreal, five years at Williamsburg, Mass., 13 years at Brattleboro, Vt. He also spent a year in Europe and two in post-graduate studies.

He was Chaplain of a Vermont Regiment, and went to the Spanish war with her regiment in 1898. He then became Secretary of the Congregational Education Society. In 1901 he became Dean and Professor of Practical Theology, in Andover Theological Seminary, one of the most honorable positions in the Congregational body.

† Curtana †

### **Isaac Groot Duryea**

United States Army Chaplain

(81<sup>st</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 10.

1838

Isaac G. Duryea, A.B.

Age 51. Chaplain 81<sup>st</sup> N.Y. Vols., Oct. 17. 1862. Mustered out with Regiment, Aug. 31, 1865.

**William Rankin Duryee**

United States Army Chaplain

(1<sup>st</sup> Kentucky Infantry)

Source: *Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1897-98* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899): 2: 2587.

Duryee, Dr. William Rankin in New Brunswick, N.J., Jan. 20; b. in Newark N.J., Apr. 10, 1838; graduated at Rutgers College in 1856 and at the New Brunswick Theological Seminary in 1861; served during the war as chaplain and acting assistant surgeon. In 1864 he organized and was pastor of the Reformed Church at Lafayette, a suburb of Jersey City, until 1891, when he became professor of ethics and chaplain at Rutgers College. He was the author of a number of publications.

† Curtana †

**Jacob Henry Enders**

United States Army Chaplain

(153<sup>rd</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 43.

1858

Jacob Henry Enders, A.B.

Chaplain 153<sup>d</sup> N.Y. Vols.. Oct. 18. 1862. Mustered out with Regiment, Oct. 2, 1865.

† Curtana †

**Julian Paydras Faison**

Confederate Army Chaplain

(1<sup>st</sup> North Carolina Cavalry & 38<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 18.

1847

Julien Paydras Faison.

Chaplain 1<sup>st</sup> Nor. Carolina Cavalry, C.S.A. Chaplain 38<sup>th</sup> Nor. Carolina Infantry C.S.A. Served sixteen months.

† Curtana †

**Isaac O. Fillmore**

United States Army Chaplain

(15<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 12.

1840

Isaac O. Fillmore, ΦBK, D.D.

Chaplain 15<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Cavalry, May 18, 1864.

† Curtana †

**Hiram James Gordon**

United States Army Chaplain

(116<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 43.

1858

Hiram James Gordon, ΦBK, A.B.

Age 34. Chaplain 116<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols. March 25, 1865. Mustered out with Regiment, June 8, 1865.

† Curtana †

**Simon Sartwell Goss**

United States Army Chaplain

(75<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 17.

1846

Simon S. Goss ΦBK, A.M.

Age 39. Chaplain 75<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols., Nov. 6, 1862. Discharged, March 4, 1863.

† Curtana †

**Francis Bloodgood Hall**

United States Army Chaplain

(16<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 26.

1852

Francis B. Hall, ΦBK, A.M.

Age 35. Chaplain 16<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols., Oct. 17, 1862. Mustered out with Regiment, May 22, 1863. Congressional Medal of Honor for distinguished bravery at the battle of Salem Heights, Va., May 3, 1863.

### **David Heagle**

United States Army Chaplain

(100<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 49.

1859 David Heagle, ΦBK, Ph.d., D.D., LL.D.

Chaplain 1<sup>st</sup> Michigan Sharpshooters, July 25, 1863. Mustered out, July 28, 1865.

The following entry, of some relationship to Chaplain Heagle, is recorded on page 47 of the same volume:

1859

John Hubbell Carter, A.B.

Though from Connecticut, being a teacher in Lexington, Ky., when war broke out, he sided with the South. Private 2<sup>d</sup> Kentucky Cavalry C.S.A., July 14, 1862. Wounded, Nov. 5, 1862, at Nashville, Tenn., captured, recovered and escaped, rejoining his company Dec. 21<sup>st</sup>. Captured when with Gen. Morgan in the Ohio raid. At Camp Douglass he found his classmate, David Heagle, serving as Chaplain of the Regiment guarding the camp. Escaped in March, 1864. Rejoined his Regiment in April. Became Captain of his Company. Surrendered at Woodstock, Va., May, 1865.

† Curtana †

### **Oscar Blakeslee Hitchcock**

Union Volunteer Chaplain

(Hospital)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 26.

1852

Oscar B. Hitchcock, ΦBK, A.M.

Chaplain U.S. Vols., 1862-6.

† Curtana †

### **Oscar Blakeslee Hitchcock**

Union Volunteer Chaplain

(Hospital)

Source: Henry M. Dodd, *Centennial of the Old First Congregational Church, Windham, New York, June 16th, 1903* (Windham, New York: Windham Journal, 1903): 24

Oscar Blakeslee Hitchcock was one of the most gifted sons of the old church. He was born May 24th, 1828, and died July 7<sup>th</sup>, 1897, of paralysis. He fitted for college at Delhi, Wilbraham (Mass.) and Amenia Academies and graduated from Union

College in 1852. He studied theology at Yale and Andover, where he graduated in 1856. He was licensed Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, 1857, by Essex South Association. He had a short pastorate at Owasco Lake and Whitney's Point, N.Y., but ill health led him to return home, where care of his mother detained him. Still he preached more or less and was active in the war as chaplain and in hospital work. His war addresses were notable for their force and power.

He traveled in Europe much and wrote a very fine history of Windham and Ashland. He was a poet of no mean talent. He does not seem to have ever been ordained—at least diligent search fails to find any record of ordination. Though he and his father belonged to Windham Center church, after the division, he still cherished a lively interest in the old church at Ashland, and beside several liberal gifts during life, he left it \$500 in his will. He also left \$100 to the cemetery, small sums to Freedmen schools and the bulk of his property, about \$30,000, to Union College.

† Curtana †

### **Oscar Blakeslee Hitchcock**

Union Volunteer Chaplain  
(Hospital)

Source: *Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1897-98* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899): 2: 2591-2.

Hitchcock, Oscar Blakeslee, at Shelter Island, New York, July 7; b. in Windham, N.Y., May 24, 1828; fitted for college at Delhi (N.Y.) Academy, Wesleyan Academy, Wilbraham, Mass., and Amenia (N.Y.) Seminary; graduated at Union College, 1852; studied at Yale Divinity School, Poughkeepsie Law School; graduated at Andover Theological Seminary, 1856; served through the war as a chaplain, and resided at Windham, N.Y., without charge, preaching and lecturing occasionally, being occupied principally with the care of his father's estate. He left \$30,000 and his library to Union College.

† Curtana †

### **John Kimball**

United States Army Chaplain  
(Union Hospital: Washington, D.C.)

Source: *Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1897-98* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899): 2: 2594.

Kimball, Rev. John, San Francisco, Cal., July 2, 1897; b. in Barton, Vt., Oct. 10, 1831; fitted for college at St. Johnsbury, Vt.; graduated at Dartmouth College 1856, and Union Theological Seminary (N.Y.) 1859; after a year's mission work in New York City, went by overland stage to California; was ordained in Sacramento 1861; pastor of churches at Grass Valley and San Francisco; 1863-61 in the service of the

United States Christian Commission of the Army in the East and became chaplain of Garner Hospital, Washington, D.C.; was selected by Gen. John Eaton, then assistant commissioner of the Freedmen's Bureau for Washington and the surrounding country, as superintendent of the colored schools for Washington, Alexandria, etc., and so remained afterwards with General Howard until 1869.

He did much by his skill and fidelity to put the schools on a right basis. He then returned to California; was temporary pastor of several churches and became superintendent of work among the Chinese from 1869 to 1873; from 1879 to 1897 he was associated with S.S. Smith in editing and publishing *The Pacific* as its managing editor, giving his services without compensation.

† Curtana †

**John Blair Linn**

United States Army Chaplain

(100<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 26.

1852

John Blair Linn.

Age 30. Chaplain 100<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols., Oct. 24, 1862.

Discharged, Oct. 16, 1864.

† Curtana †

**Allan McFarland**

United States Army Chaplain

(98<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 20.

1849

Allan McFarland, A.B.

Chaplain 98<sup>th</sup> Illinois Vols., Sept. 21, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment, June 27, 1865.

† Curtana †

**Donald McLaren**

United States Navy Chaplain

(Union Navy)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 30.

1853

Donald McLaren, ΦBK, DD.

Chaplain U.S. Navy, March 10, 1863.

Acting Professor of English and Ethics in the U.S. Naval Academy for two years and Chaplain of the Naval Academy for three years and of the Naval Home in Philadelphia three years. Retired as Rear Admiral U.S.N., Jan.. 1907.

† Curtana †

**David Tilton Morrill**

United States Army Chaplain

(26<sup>th</sup> New Jersey Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 21.

1849

David T. Morrill, ΦBK, D.D.

Chaplain 26<sup>th</sup> New Jersey Vols., Sept. 18, 1862. Mustered out with Regiment, June 27, 1863.

† Curtana †

**Alexander Vernon Murdock**

United States Army Chaplain

(38<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 17.

1845

Alexander Vernon Murdock, ΦBK, A. M.

Age 35. Chaplain 38<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols., June 8, 1861. Discharged, Oct. 25, 1862.

† Curtana †

**James Nichols**

United States Army Chaplain

(108<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 9.

1835

James Nichols, ΦBK, A.M.

Age 50. Chaplain 108<sup>th</sup> N. Y. Vols., Aug. 13, 1862. Discharged, March 14, 1863. Died in 1864.

**Henry Horatio Northrop**

United States Army Chaplain

(13<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 8.

1834

Henry H. Northrop. ΦBK, A.B.

Appointed Chaplain 13th Michigan Vols., Jan., 1862. Resigned, Dec. 26, 1862.

† Curtana †

**Levi Warren Norton**

United States Army Chaplain

(72<sup>nd</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 14.

1843

Levi W. Norton, A.M.

Age 41. Chaplain 72<sup>d</sup> N.Y. Vols.. July 17, 1861. Discharged, April 20, 1862.

† Curtana †

**Lemuel Gregory Olmstead**

United States Army Chaplain

(Union Hospital: Alexandria, Virginia)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 8.

1834 Lemuel G. Olmstead, LL.D.

Hospital Chaplain Vols., June 4, 1862.

Honorably mustered out, Aug. 10, 1865.

† Curtana †

**William Hemans Perry Paddock**

United States Army Chaplain

(Union Hospital: Pennsylvania)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 12.

1840

Wm. H. P. Paddock, A.M.

Hospital Chaplain Vols., July 5, 1862. Honorably discharged, March 28, 1863.

Hospital Chaplain Vols., June 19, 1863. Honorably mustered out, May 7, 1867.

### **Jacob L. Pearse**

United States Army Chaplain

(74<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 21.

1849

Jacob L. Pearse, ΦBK, A.B.

Chaplain 74<sup>th</sup> Illinois Vols., 1864-3.

† Curtana †

### **Ira Fayette Pettibone**

United States Army Chaplain

(74<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry)

Source: *Report of the Commissioner of Education for the Year 1897-98* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1899): 2: 2598.

Pettibone, Ira Fayette, D.D., in Rockton, Ill., Mar. 31; b. in Stockholm, N.Y., Mar. 24, 1824; fitted for college at St. Lawrence Academy, Potsdam, N.Y.; graduated at Union College, 1849; taught in academy at Sherburne, N.Y., 1849-50, and in a boys' school in Montreal, Canada, 1850-51; graduated at Andover Theological Seminary in 1854; was in the mission field in Turkey, with the exception of a few years, until 1803; served as a chaplain in the civil war; was a professor in the Theological Seminary at Tocal, Turkey.

† Curtana †

### **Samuel Sandford Potter**

United States Army Chaplain

(Hospital: New Albany, Indiana)

Source: Henry M. Dodd, *Centennial of the Old First Congregational Church, Windham, New York, June 16th, 1903* (Windham, New York: Windham Journal, 1903): 40.

The next pastor was Rev. Samuel Sandford Potter, just graduated from Union Theological Seminary, who came in the Spring of 1845, introduced by a classmate. He was ordained, but not installed, by Columbia Presbytery, May 27<sup>th</sup>, 1846. A gentle revival occurred the first Winter. He left in the Fall of 1846, on account of his fear of the climate and the need for him at his parents' home. (Mr. Potter, after a long and busy life as pastor, teacher, chaplain in the army, and editor, mostly in Ohio, died Jan. 22<sup>d</sup>, 1899, in his 85<sup>th</sup> years. Mr. and Mrs. Potter were both from New Providence, N. J. Her maiden name was Phebe Riggs, and she was a sister of the Rev. Elias Riggs, D.D., a noted missionary to Constantinople. Her sister married Dr. Monfort of the *Herald and Presbyter*. Mr. and Mrs. Potter both wanted to be foreign missionaries, but the way was hedged up for them. They gave a son, however, Rev. J.L. Potter, D.D., missionary to Persia.)

**John Williams Proudfit**

United States Army Chaplain

(Union Hospital: New Jersey & Pennsylvania)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 5.

1821

John W. Proudfit, A.B., D.D.

Appointed Hospital Chaplain of Vols. June 20, 1862. Honorably mustered out, Aug. 21, 1865.

† Curtana †

**George L. Robinson**

United States Army Chaplain

(Union Post Chaplain: Kansas)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 13.

1842

George L. Robinson.

Post Chaplain U.S.A., Fort Leavenworth, Kan.

† Curtana †

**George Robinson**

United States Army Chaplain

(1800s)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 64.

1861

George Robinson, ΦBK, A.M., D.D.

Age 21. 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieut. 123<sup>d</sup> N.Y. Vols. Sept. 4. 1862. 1<sup>st</sup> Lieut. 123<sup>d</sup> N. Y. Vols. Nov. 11, 1863. Mustered out, June 8, 1865. Brevet Captain U.S. Vols., for services in Georgia and the Carolinas, March 13, 1865. Became Lieut. Colonel and Chaplain U.S.A., March 1, 1877. Is now Brevet Brigadier General U.S.A., retired.

† Curtana †

**Rodman H. Robinson**

United States Army Chaplain

(32<sup>nd</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 14.

1843

Rodman H. Robinson, D.D.

Chaplain 32<sup>d</sup> N.Y. Vols. June 1. 1861. Resigned, Feb. 22. 1862.

† Curtana †

**Montgomery Schuyler**

United States Army Chaplain

(Union Hospital: Missouri)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 8.

1834

Montgomery Schuyler, A.B., DD.

Chaplain U.S.A., 1861-2.

† Curtana †

**Ova Hoyt Seymour**

United States Army Chaplain

(157<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 25.

1851

Ova Hoyt Seymour, A.M.

Chaplain 157<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols., March 7, 1863. Mustered out with Regiment, July 10, 1865.

† Curtana †

**Alexander McAllister Thorburn**

United States Army Chaplain

(91<sup>st</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 40.

1857

Alexander McAllister Thorburn, ΦBK, A.M.

Age 28. Chaplain 91<sup>st</sup> N.Y. Vols. Sept. 9. 1864.

† Curtana †

**David Tully**

United States Army Chaplain

(77<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 18.

1847

David Tully. D.D.

Age 42. Chaplain 77<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols., Nov. 23, 1861. Discharged, July 7, 1862. He served in the Peninsula Campaign, the Siege of Yorktown and the Seven-day battles.

† Curtana †

### **John Visger Van Ingen**

United States Army Chaplain

(8<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 6.

1826

John V. Van Ingen, A.B., D.D.

Chaplain 8<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry. Nov. 18. 1861. Discharged, January 22, 1864.

† Curtana †

### **Peter S. Van Nest**

United States Army Chaplain

(36<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 11

1838

Peter S. Van Nest, D.D.

Chaplain 36<sup>th</sup> Wisconsin Vols., March, 1864. Discharged, Jan. 6, 1865.

† Curtana †

### **Cornelius Van Santvoord**

United States Army Chaplain

(80<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry, Union Hospital)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 9.

1835

Cornelius Van Santvoord, ΦBK, D.D.

Age 44. Chaplain 80<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols., Oct. 10. 1861. Discharged, Nov. 18, 1862.

**Robert Howard Wallace, Jr.**

United States Army Chaplain

(19<sup>th</sup>, 91<sup>st</sup> & 168<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 23.

1850

R. Howard Wallace, ΦBK, A.B.

Age 33. Chaplain 19<sup>th</sup> and 91<sup>st</sup> N.Y. Vols., 1861-2.

Chaplain 168<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols., Sept. 18, 1862. Mustered out with Regiment, Oct. 31, 1863.

† Curtana †

**Ferdinand de Wilton Ward**

United States Army Chaplain

(104<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 7-8.

1831

Ferdinand D. Ward, D.D.

Chaplain 104<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols. July 17, 1862, to Sept. 16, 1862, and from Dec. 24, 1862, to Nov. 25, 1863, when he was discharged for disability.

† Curtana †

**John Edabduel Werth**

United States Army Chaplain

(75<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry & 13<sup>th</sup> Missouri Cavalry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 52.

1859

John Edabduel Werth, ΦBK, A.B.

Age 27. Chaplain 75<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Vols. June 29, 1863. Mustered out, Dec. 6, 1864. Chaplain 13<sup>th</sup> Missouri Veteran Cavalry, 1865-6.

† Curtana †

**John Hills Woodward**

United States Army Chaplain

(1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Cavalry)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 8.

1834

John Hills Woodward.

Chaplain 1<sup>st</sup> Vermont Cavalry, Nov., 1861. Known as the fighting Chaplain, having led the charge at New Market. Resigned, July 17, 1863.

† Curtana †

**Malcolm W. Woodworth**

Confederate Army Chaplain

(Regiment Unverified)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 32.

1854

Malcolm W. Woodworth, ΦBK, A.B.

Chaplain of a Virginia Regiment C.S.A.

† Curtana †

**William Janes Wright**

United States Army Chaplain

(76<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry and Hospital)

Source: Healey Fearey, *Union College Alumni in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (Schenectady, New York: Union University, 1915): 42.

1857

Wm. J. Wright, ΦBK, D.D. LL.D.

Chaplain 76<sup>th</sup> Pa. Vols. Resigned, Sept. 7, 1864.

## † Curious Citations †

### **Ministry as a Japanese Prisoner of War**

*From the experiences of Chaplain Robert Taylor, a survivor of the Bataan Death March.*

While rummaging through an old garbage heap near the camp, one of the men found a worn-out typewriter, and he proudly carried it to the chapel. . . .

Taylor looked at it skeptically. The machine was rusted, several keys were missing, and it had no ribbon. Undaunted, the soldier carried the typewriter to his barracks, then went to the commandant's office to request a bottle of ink for use by the chaplains. When it was given to him, he went back to his barracks, removed his shirt and cut it into thin strips. Then he placed the strips in a small bowl and poured the ink over them. Soaking them thoroughly.

It worked. The next morning they had a ribbon, and the soldiers started typing up the daily announcements for the chapel bulletin board. Appropriate quotations from the Bible and other bits of news were posted; the missing letters were filled in with pencil.

The chaplains watched as one by one the men sauntered up to the bulletin board and began to read. Long isolated from most books, papers and other channels of information [most had been imprisoned for over two years by that time], they reveled in the opportunity to read a wide-awake bulletin board.

“Now the flag,” Taylor announced.

“You think it's all right?”

“We'll soon find out.”

He cut a thirty-foot bamboo pole and chopped off the branches. . . . As they were digging a hole for the flagpole, a guard wanted to know what they were doing, and Taylor told him that they too wanted to have *suru* [something to do]. Apparently, this answer satisfied him, for he left them, and short after, the pole was in its place.

Father Duffey, when he had been brought to the camp, had not been searched and had managed to bring with him a Christian flag, the symbol of the Chaplain Corps.

Now it was attached to the pulley and slowly raised. As it rippled gently in the breeze over the chapel, Taylor told his friends, “I’ll never lower it,” and the men agreed the Japanese themselves would have to take it if they wanted it.

Billy Keith  
*Days of Anguish, Days of Hope*  
(Knopf Doubleday, 1995): 161-62.

† Curtana †

## The Dutch Army’s First Muslim Chaplains

*In a 2009 editorial that is supportive of the appointment of Muslim’s to serve as chaplains in the Dutch army, we note a key reservation about one of the two candidates.*

The Dutch army already has Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, Hindu and humanist chaplains. . . . no one will deny that there is a need for Muslim spiritual caretakers in the army.

This week two imams were supposed to get their degree after completing their training at the national defence academy: the Turkish-Dutch Saoud Aydin and the Moroccan-Dutch Ali Eddaoudi. Only the populist Party for Freedom (PVV) opposes the appointment of Aydin because of his membership of the Turkish Islamic organisation Milli Görüs.

But several parties have protested the appointment of Eddaoudi because of the controversial views he has aired in several newspaper or internet columns. Deputy defence minister Jack de Vries now regrets his decision.

Eddaoudi, who previously worked as a spiritual caretaker in prisons and hospitals, has a right to his opinion—even if it shows little delicacy to call prime minister Balkenende “less worthy than a doormat . . .”

The heart of the matter is an opinion article he wrote . . . According to Eddaoudi, Dutch soldiers have no business in Afghanistan. He says what the West is doing there is “nothing more than an ordinary attempt to terrorise people.” Earlier he wrote that “Christians are still at war with Islam.”

De Vries says Eddaoudi has distanced himself from his earlier statements. That may be. But it doesn’t make him anymore suited to give spiritual care to a troubled Dutch soldier in Afghanistan. An imam like Eddaoudi has no place in the Dutch army.

From the nrc.nl website  
December, 2014

## A Rolling Chaplain

The son of Dr. Eastman, Secretary of the Tract Society, is a chaplain. His horse plunging during a battle, struck him on the knee-pan [patella]. His leg swelled and stiffened until the pain became almost unendurable. When he could no longer stand, he gave his horse up to a servant, and had himself to lie on the ground. The pain was intense. Darkness settled over him. He had to take a wounded soldier's place alone that night.

As he lay on his back, suffering and thinking, he heard a voice—"Oh, my God!" He thought, can anybody be swearing in such a place as this? He listened again, and a prayer began. It was a wounded soldier praying. How can I get at him? [sic] was his first impulse. He tried to draw up his stiffened limb, the while setting his teeth and clenching his hands for the pain. But he could not rise.

Then he drew his arm around a sapling, drew up his well foot, and tried to lift the other up and extend it without bending, that he might walk; but he fell back in the effort with a heavy fall that jarred through him like a stab! Then he thought, "I can roll." And over and over, in pain, he rolled in blood, and over dead bodies, until he fell against a dying man, *and there he preached Christ, and prayed.*

At length one of the line officers came up and said, "Where's the chaplain? Where's the chaplain? One of the staff officers is dying."

"Here he is, here he is," cried out the suffering hero.

"Well, such [and such] an officer is dying, can't you come and see him?"

"I cannot move. I have just rolled up along side this dying man to talk to him."

"If I detail two men to carry you, shall they do it?"

"Yes."

They took him gently up and carried him. And that live long night these two men rode him over the battle-field and laid him down in blood beside bleeding, dying men; and he preached Christ to them, and prayed. He had to look up then, brethren; he could look no other way from that position, not even into the face of the dying; and with God's stars shining down on him, and heaven bending over him, he had to preach Christ and pray!

Amos Stevens Billingsley  
*From the Flag to the Cross*  
 (New-World Publishing, 1872): 35-36.

## Skills Possessed by Space-Faring Chaplains

*The following analysis of Frank Herbert's novel, Destination: Void, describes the synergy among the small crew of the space Earthling. They are tasked with guiding the vessel, loaded with sleeping colonists, as it departs our solar system, beginning a two-hundred-year mission to Tau Ceti.*

The four crew members are carefully drawn to represent different approaches to the problem of developing high-level machine intelligence—the intelligence necessary for mankind's survival, according to the analogue of *Destination: Void*. Timberlake, the life systems engineer, reflects the biological view; his concern is to maintain life.

Flattery is trained as a psychiatrist and a chaplain; he examines the role of instinct and emotion in intelligence, and he voices ethical and theological concerns. Prudence Weygand, the femal crew member, is a medical doctor, particularly interested in the chemistry of the brain. The final crew member, the most powerful personality, is Bickel, a computer scientist. He is clearly defined by Herbert as “purpose” and “creative consciousness.” He is the driving force in developing the mechanical consciousness necessary to replace the failed organic brains. In summary, the crew represents psychology, biology, chemistry, and computer science—the four disciplines most active at present in the study of reason and thought in the computer and human brain.

Herbert adds a chaplain to raise philosophical and ethical issues. These personae allow him to explore from all angles the relationship of machine and human intelligence. A given in the situation is the necessity of developing artificial intelligence. The long-term survival of the ship depends on it. . . .

If machine intelligence can be created, is it safe? Might not the creation turn out to be a “rogue consciousness,” full of pure destruction. If safe, is it morally defensible? As Flattery, the chaplain, points out, “The issue's whether we're intruding on God's domain of creation.” Flattery, without knowledge of the rest of the crew, has been assigned to destroy the ship should rogue consciousness be developed.

*And so, we learn that the ship's chaplain is not only responsible for “ethical and theological concerns.” He also possesses espionage and explosive ordnance expertise.*

Patricia S. Warrick, Editor  
*The Cybernetic Imagination in Science Fiction*  
 (Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 1980): 182-83.

## Civil War Prison Sermons

*Chaplain Billingsley of the 101<sup>st</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry was captured with his entire regiment in 1864. Although he and other Union chaplains, along with their surgeons, were released after a brief incarceration, he records this account of his imprisonment at Libby.*

I had not been long within the massive walls of that terrible place until they found out I was a chaplain, and invited me to preach. A room was selected, an hour appointed, and the people invited; Bible and hymn-books procured, and, at the appointed time, we met in the name of Him who said, “Lo, I am with you always!” and we had a very large, attentive congregation and a solemn, interesting meeting. I chose for the text God's precious, encouraging promise to Moses and the children of Israel, when they were in troubles and trials, journeying through the wilderness to Canaan, “My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” (Ex. xxxiii. 14.)

God's presence, essential and gracious, and the rest it affords. God Is Present, that, though prisoners of war, shut up in this stronghold in the rebel capital, yet the “Lord of hosts is with us,” “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble,” that Jesus Christ is here, waiting to be gracious, waiting to sustain, guide, guard, comfort, and save us. Though encompassed with the strong rebel guard, yet God was with us, and it was good to be there. The next day but one, I preached again on the attractions of the cross; and many were drawn together, and seemed by Christ's constraining love to draw very near to God; and the congregation was much larger and the services more solemn and impressive.

Some of the Richmond clergy came in and preached occasionally, until one spoke contemptibly of our flag, and he could never get a hearing afterward. The people seemed to be hungering for the gospel, and anxious to hear preaching. Libby was a good, promising field for preaching, and therefore, with all its hardness and deprivations, I regretted, in some respects, to leave it.

Amos Stevens Billingsley  
*From the Flag to the Cross*  
(New-World Publishing, 1872): 73-74.

† Curtana †

## Jewish Chaplains Down Under

Rabbi Raymond Apple, currently spiritual leader of Sydney's Great Synagogue and Senior Jewish Chaplain to Australia's Armed Forces since 1988, has analysed the 'paradox' of military chaplaincy as the attempt to balance armed power with divine spirit: “War is sometimes necessary; defence preparedness is essential to a nation;

and a defence force needs a religious advisory arm to watch over the morality of its policies and the morale of its troops.”

Jewish chaplains have been attached to the Australian Army since 1908 and the appointment to the Commonwealth Military Forces of Rev (later Rabbi) Jacob Danglow of the St Kilda Hebrew Congregation.

Sydney’s Rabbi Francis Lyon Cohen, who had the distinction of being the first Jewish chaplain appointed by the British Military Forces (in 1892), involved himself similarly with the Australian national defence following his arrival in NSW in 1905, and served as chaplain from 1909 until his death in 1934.

Cohen inaugurated an annual military service at the Great Synagogue during the festival of *Chanukkah* in 1907, was outspoken in favour of conscription during World War I because he saw support of the war effort as ‘an act of religious virtue,’ and once exhorted the community’s youth: “May they never forget that they are called upon to uphold not only their country’s political independence, but still more her moral ideals of liberty and equal opportunity.”

On another occasion, Cohen declared unequivocally: “We British Jews . . . who love the privilege of fully serving the Empire over which this flag waves, can none of us be too zealous, too devoted in her service.”

Other clergy who have emulated the example of Danglow and Cohen, both in and out of wartime, include Rev Solomon Marks Solomon of Melbourne (who, by virtue of age and length of service, was officially senior Hebrew chaplain in Victoria from 1910 until his death), Rabbi Leib Isack Falk (a World War I veteran and long-serving assistant minister at the Great Synagogue, who was a chaplain with the Commonwealth forces from 1935) . . .

No Jew has yet held a chaplaincy with the RAN and, to date, only one chaplain, Rabbi Dr. Shalom Coleman of Perth, has been attached to the RAAF.

Malcolm J. Turnbull  
*Safe Haven: Records of the Jewish Experience in Australia*  
(National Archives of Australia, 2000).

† Curtana †

## Healing Amidst the Rubble of the Twin Towers

*The following comes from the story of a civilian chaplain who served during the chaos that followed the terrorist attacks on September 11.*

St. Paul’s Chapel . . . offered the [disaster response] workers something that fed a different hunger, adding to a sense of historic survival for those who sought respite

there. The historic church exuded an unspoken feeling of patriotism in the shadow of an act of war. It was a tiny stronghold of living history that had withstood more than two centuries of New York City development. It had survived every war the United States had ever fought. Such solidity and history nurtured us as much as the gentleness of its volunteer staff. I returned there often during the autumn of 2001. Although I spend only minutes at a time there, the peace felt like hours of care.

Ray Giunta  
*God @ Ground Zero*  
(Nashville: Integrity, 2002): 71-72.

† Curtana †

## Recruiting Hindu Chaplains in America

US Armed Forces are recruiting qualified Hindus as career clergy among its soldiers.

Armies since ancient times have required the services of religious guides. Consider, for example, Lord Krishna on the battlefield at Kurukshetra, advising Arjuna on his duties as a *kshatriya*, or warrior. This reality of war has not changed, and nearly every army in the world provides chaplains to minister to its soldiers. What has changed is the religious make-up of the world's armies.

In a dramatic example of America's religious pluralism, the US Armed Forces have commissioned not only Jewish and Christian chaplains of all denominations, but Buddhist and Islamic ones as well. Recently the Department of Defense stated its willingness to commission Hindu chaplains to minister to the nearly one thousand Hindus, mostly doctors, serving in American armed forces. . . .

The Indian Army has the same system, but uses the term "religious teachers." These serve as junior commissioned officers, *nayabsubadar*. There are religious teachers of five faiths—Hindu, Islamic, Sikh, Buddhist and Christian. They are trained for their religious duties at a special school. Each major military base in India has a *sarva dharma sthal* where all religions can worship. Some bases have built huge temples—for example, that of the Rajputana regiment in Delhi.

The post of chaplain in a branch of the US Armed Forces presents an interesting career option to a motivated Hindu. . . . The services are prepared to adapt their requirements to the particulars of the Hindu priestly tradition. . . .

Overall, chaplains are responsible for the morale of the troops and expected to counsel anyone in need. Every chaplain is trained to give last rites to a dying soldier of any religion. "There are no atheists in foxholes," says the old military adage. But proselytizing or "sheep-stealing"—converting soldiers from other

denominations or religions—is not only frowned upon but would be cause for disciplinary action, according to one senior chaplain.

Pay is good, beginning at US\$30,000 per year at the rank of captain, and perhaps reaching \$60,000 as a full colonel by the end of a 20-year career. Benefits are excellent—housing, food, full lifetime medical coverage, discount purchasing at base stores and 30 vacation days per year, to name a few. Lifetime retirement pay is about 50% of the highest salary earned. The entire employment package is far beyond anything the Hindu temples offer their priests.

“Call for Military Ministers”  
*Hinduism Today* (web edition)  
Retrieved from HinduismToday.com

† Curtana †

## Wisdom from “Father Mulcahy”

I have had the good fortune to be part of one of the most widely acclaimed and popular comedies in television history. The experience of making television is not nearly as glamorous as it might seem, nor are the actors involved a particularly glamorous group of people. Yet there is a certain aura of glamour which comes with show business success, and a certain number of honors that are the by-products of it.

That is how it happened that on a particular evening in early 1987 I stood at a podium, blinded by lights, being applauded for my contribution to the image of religion on television. My thirteen years of playing father Mulcahy in “M\*A\*S\*H” and its sequel “AfterM\*A\*S\*H” had not turned me into a priest, and I hope that it was with humility that I accepted a statuette that seemed more appropriately to belong to a fictitious character.

William & Barbara Christopher  
*Mixed Blessings*  
(Abingdon, 1989): 9.

† Curtana †

## Promoting Courage in a Civil War Sermon

*The following exhortation comes from an 1862 sermon preached by Chaplain Abraham Warner of the 12<sup>th</sup> Illinois Cavalry during the American Civil War.*

He is really the most merciful commander who loses a thousand men in achieving a decisive victory, when the loss of half that number would have left the case

undecided and necessitated the renewal of the engagement with the certain loss of an equal number more.

Thus you will see that there is in the Bible no countenancing of timidity in war, no command to spare when the good of society requires that a blow shall be struck, but on the contrary, every energy & every endeavor should be put forth to achieve a victory.

Herbert B. Enderton, Editor  
*The Private Journal of Abraham Joseph Warner*  
(San Diego: Private Printing, 1973): 149.

† Curtana †

## A Chaplain Ponders War's Uncertainties

*This book was published in 1943, while the outcome of the war was yet to be determined.*

War came to us as I was conducting a Sunday service on a transport bound for the Philippines.

While we were gathered to pray and hear God's word on the old S.S. Republic, ten days out of Honolulu, the news of Pearl Harbor reached us.

There are some situations for which a man can just never be prepared. At religious school we never considered what to do if, while leading a service, we suddenly learned that our congregation was at war.

Yet that is exactly what I faced on that peaceful Sunday morning. At nine o'clock I had a khaki-clad congregation whose thoughts were far removed from war. Within a half-hour we were on a journey that would leave some of us sick and crippled; a journey from which many of us would never return; a journey that one of us would ever forget.

William C. Taggart  
*My Fighting Congregation*  
(Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran & Company, 1943): 1.

† Curtana †

## A Fine Epitaph for a Chaplain

*From the author's preface to his comprehensive biography of John Howe, chaplain to Oliver Cromwell, the Lord Protector.*

The biographer of Howe, as [Henry] Rogers says, has a happy task to perform. There are no dark spots to cover, no apologies to be made. One is called to mark the path of the upright, and to rejoice over a light which shines more and more unto the perfect day.

Robert F. Horton

*John Howe*

(London: Methuen, 1905): vi.





Spiral Galaxy M81. (Photo courtesy of NASA.)

**“Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth,  
before the evil days come and the years draw near  
of which you will say, “I have no pleasure in them;”  
before the sun and the light and the moon and the stars  
are darkened and the clouds return after the rain,  
in the day when the keepers of the house tremble,  
and the strong men are bent . . .  
because man is going to his eternal home,  
and the mourners go about the streets . . .  
and the dust returns to the earth as it was,  
and the spirit returns to God who gave it.**

*Ecclesiastes 12:1-7 (ESV)*

## **Curtana † Sword of Mercy**

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